

THE GREAT  
D U T Y  
*Geo. OF Barthe.*  
Self-Resignation  
TO THE  
DIVINE WILL.

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*By the late Pious and Learned*  
JOHN WORTHINGTON, D.D.

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Luke xxii. 42.  
-----*Nevertheless not my will, but thine be done.*  
Rom. vi. 13. —  
-----*But yield your selves unto God. !*

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*Jo. Battely.*

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## The PREFACE.



THE following Treatise contains the Substance of several Sermons, which were Preached on divers Texts relating to each other, and most of them at *Benet-Fink* in *London*, where the worthy Author was for some time Preacher, till his Church and Parish were laid in Ashes ; and they were the *last* that were heard from him in that place.

On that Lord's-day whereon the dreadful Fire of *London* brake forth, he was come to insist on the Exemplary *Resignation* of holy *Job* to the Divine Will under those dismal Sufferings he was exercised with, which is the Argument of the Ninth Chapter of the Second Section of this Discourse. And it is to be believed that he was directed by a very *special* Providence to so highly useful and seasonable a Subject, for the preparing his Hearers for that heavy Calamity which was so nearly approaching them.

Some of those Sermons I heard much commended about the time they were

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Preached, and since the much lamented Death of the good Doctor, a worthy Friend having found them all tied together, among a confused company of Papers, with this Inscription, *Self-Resignation*, he delivered them into *my* hands, signifying withal that he had for the most part perused them, to his great satisfaction: And I quickly saw a cause to believe that it would be a good work to make them publick.

And had it not been for multiplicity of business, which forced me frequently, and that for a considerable time together, to lay it aside, This Treatise might have been completed, and seen the light above a year ago.

And now that it is (through the goodness of God) at length come abroad, I hope the same allowance will be made for it, that uses to be for Posthumous Pieces; and also that none will expect that the Author should have written with such accuracy for the *Pulpit*, as he would have done for the *Press*.

But yet, as it is, I doubt not but all understanding and ingenuous Readers will acknowledge it highly worthy a serious perusal; and that it is excellently fitted for the promoting a Christian's proficiency in his Master's School.

As for the *Subject* it treats of, *Self-Resignation*,

## The Preface.

*nation*, there is no Duty more evident: Nothing is more apparently reasonable, than that we are obliged to give up *our selves to God*, to be used and acted by him as shall seem best to his unerring Wisdom. Nor is any thing so unnatural as for the Wills of dependent Creatures to oppose themselves to the Will of their great Creator, which is inseparably conjoined with, and ever founded upon, the highest Reason, Righteousness and Goodness. There is not such a Prodigy or Monster in Nature; as he that will not suffer that same Will to rule *him* that governs the World, and refuseth to be entirely at *his* dispose, who being the *Original*, must needs be the absolute *Lord* of all things.

This Duty is also most comprehensive and of largest extent; the whole of that which *the Grace of God that bringeth Salvation teacheth* is reduceable to it: And 'tis very obvious that there is nothing either commanded or forbidden for *it self* in our Saviour's Religion, but is a necessary and *natural* expression and instance of *Self-Resignation*. I mean there is not any thing we are required in the Gospel to perform or forbear for its *own sake*, and not in order to the better enabling us to some *other* Duty, and guarding us from some *other* Sin, but it is of that nature, that *Self-Resignation* is, *antecedently*

## The Preface.

*deently* to the Command or Prohibition, inconsistent with the not doing what is *so* commanded, or the doing what is *so* forbidden. And where a Resigned Temper is, through the Divine Grace, in some good measure acquired, it will *naturally* draw after it most chearful Obedience and willing Submission to the good pleasure and appointments of our blessed Lord: So that we shall not complain of *any* of those Precepts he hath given us as harsh or grievous, nor of any affliction he trieth us with as over-severe.

Let me add, that the entire Resignation of our Wills to the Will of God must needs be a Subject, than which there cannot be any one handled of more weighty importance, in that the restoring Mankind to this excellent Temper was the grand and main Errand upon which God the Father sent his Son into the World: This is as evident as that our Fall (which brought us under the necessity of a Saviour) was no other than the loss of this Temper accompanied with the necessary and immediate consequences thereof. Man's affecting independence on his Maker, his being impatient to be restrained within those limits which his Creator had appointed him, and chusing to gratifie his senses and fond imagination with-

## *The Preface.*

without consulting with the Divine Will made known to him by the Dictates of Natural Light and External Revelation, *this* was truly his Loss of Paradise, *this* was his Lapse from the heavenly to the hellish state. And therefore the restoring Mankind to their original constitution, the reducing our Wills to a perfect harmony and compliance with the Will of God, was an undertaking of all other the most worthy of his onely begotten Son's manifesting himself in our flesh, and his *doing* and *suffering* what he did in the humane nature.

And as our Author could not have made choice of a more noble or necessary *Subject*, so I presume his *Method* and way of managing it will not be thought unworthy of it.

First, he presents us with the most *powerful* Considerations in order to our being fully convinced, and affected with a great sense, of our indispensable and eternal Obligation to *Self-Resignation*, and to the exciting and awakening us to the most serious endeavours to subdue our Wills to the Will of God.

Secondly, he directs us to the most effectual *means* for the rendring this Duty as easie as is possible to our frail and corrupt natures. And under these two general

## *The Preface.*

Heads, he hath taken occasion, without digressing from his business, to acquaint his Readers with most, if not all, the best and most important notions and principles, (I mean such as have the most apparent tendency to the promoting of true Holiness) and to rectifie the most dangerous and fatal mistakes, which are such as either directly strike at, or in their Consequences undermine a good life.

The Reader will likewise observe an excellent and most Christian Spirit running through this whole Discourse, and see great reason to believe that the Author was very much affected with what he hath written; that his *heart* was powerfully touched with the Arguments he pursueth; and that he had not a mere notional but *experimental* knowledge of the Excellency of a Self-denying, *Resigned* temper; and was acted with a great zeal for the propagation of it, as being truly sensible that it is the very *Life* and *Soul* of Christianity.

He appeared to all that knew him to have a vigorous sense of *this* Principle, most of his Discourses in the Pulpit were much tinged with it, and he gave many singular proofs of his living under the power and government of it.

If the Author's Copiousness of Style, and repeat-

## *The Preface.*

repeating (according to his usual manner) the same thing somewhat often in different expressions shall offend any, I would desire them to consider that this way is not without its advantages both to Hearers and Readers: For by this means the matters discoursed are made the more intelligible to the meaner Capacities, and apt to make in *all* sorts the deeper and more abiding impression. And, however it happens, we find by experience that one manner of expressing a thing doth frequently more affect us, than another that's as proper, as significant and as easily understood.

If any shall object against the Author's repeating some of his Motives to the *seeking* among his Directions for the *obtaining* a *Resigned Temper*, they ought to remember that the same Considerations may serve very properly both those purposes in *different* respects.

If some of the Arguments in the former Section shall seem in effect and for substance the *same*, this will not be looked upon as a just ground of exception by those that shall perceive, that they occasion, however, *distinct* Discourses, and those very pertinent and profitable; and 'tis sufficient if there be but a *modal* difference betwixt heads of discourse.

Now

## *The Preface.*

Now the God of all Grace, without whose Blessing all our Endeavours prove ineffectual, make this Treatise, with all other the pious Labours of his Servants, instrumental to the furthering the great End of our Christian Faith: The conforming us more and more to the Divine Will and Likeness, the qualifying us by Purity of Heart, and a participation of that Image of God, which consists in Righteousness and true Holiness, for his special favour and complacential love in this World, and a glorious Immortality in the complete enjoyment of the ever blessed Trinity in the World to come. And (to conclude with that excellent Prayer in our Liturgy) *Prevent us, O Lord, in all our doings with thy most gracious favour, and further us with thy continual help, that in all our works begun, continued and ended in thee, we may glorifie thy holy Name, and finally by thy Mercy obtain Everlasting Life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*

*Edward Fowler.*

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T H E  
I N T R O D U C T I O N.

**A**Mongst all Divine Truths, none are more frequently, more powerfully, to be prest and urged, than those that are wholly practical, that refer to Spiritual Obedience, that pertain *πρός Θεόν & ἑαυτοῖς*, to life and godliness, that tend to the real bettering of Man, and transforming him into the Divine Image; such as are most powerful to the subduing our *own* Wills, as divided from *God's*, and the bringing them unto a conformity to the Will of God.

But alas! these great practical Truths have been too commonly either sparingly, or but coldly and insignificantly, not fully, clearly and vigorously recommended. The great noise and ado in the Christian World hath been about the lighter matters of the Law, *Mint, Annise and Cammin, Meats and Drinks*, wherein the Kingdom of God doth not consist. The great talk and zeal hath been about things less necessary and more obscure and doubtful: men *doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings and evil surmisings*. It pleaseth men to hear of *speculative Doctrins*, and to be entertained with a lascivious Preaching of the Gospel, made up all of *Promises*

## The Introduction.

*mises* and these wholly unconditional; it gratifies them to hear what is done *without* them, rather than what is to be done *within* them, and the necessity of sincere and entire obedience to our Saviour's Precepts urged upon them. All would *reign* with Christ, but they would not *suffer* with him; they would hear only of Christ's dying for sin, of his being crucified for them; but to hear of their dying to sin and their own corrupt will, of their being crucified with him, and suffering their wills to be resigned to the will of the Father as Christ's was, to hear of making an entire oblation of themselves to God, *this is a hard saying*, few will bear it, 'tis very unpleasing to flesh and blood, 'tis too *spiritual* a Gospel for the carnal mind to relish. But how unpleasing soever it be, it is not therefore to be forborn; for *if we should seek to please men, we should not be the servants of Christ*. If we should gratifie and humour insincere people in their soft and delicate self-chosen Religion, and their wilting their own will, we should not be faithful to their souls, whose grand interest and necessary concernment it is to know and practise this first and great Lesson in the School of Christ. Self-Resignation is a great part of the Doctrin that is *according to godliness*. They are the wholsom (or healing) words of our Lord Jesus Christ, viz. *He that doth not take up his Cross, and come after me, cannot be my disciple: Nor is he worthy of me*.

Αὐτοὶ ὁρί-  
σιντες.  
Luke xiv.  
27.  
Mat. x. 38.

This is healing Doctrin that alone can cure the inward Distempers of our Souls, and therefore absolutely necessary to be taught and prest withall authority. It matters not that the carnally minded and delicate Christian doth not re-  
lish

lish it. We that are the Ministers of the Gospel are to imitate careful and prudent Physicians, who, when they come to their Patients, do not ask them what they love best, and then prescribe them what is most pleasing to their Palates, though most hurtful; but, informing themselves well of the case of the diseased, they appoint what they judge most proper for them, though it be no whit grateful or acceptable to them.

But howsoever the resigning their wills to the will of God be as loathsom Physick to the carnal, it is to the truly spiritual both meat and drink, as it was to their great Master: It is their constant Diet, the savoury Meat which their Souls love and live by: They esteem the fore-mentioned and the like words of their Saviour's mouth, *more than their necessary food*: to borrow *Job's* expression, Chap. xxiii. 12.

And this so little minded, so much neglected Doctrine of *Self-Resignation* is that which I design to treat of, and with all seriousness to recommend to those that name the name of Christ. For the more distinct understanding whereof, we must know that *Self-Resignation* doth relate either, First, to the *Commands* of God, particularly such Commands as are difficult to nature, and grievous to flesh and blood (for to obey in *lesser* and more *easy* instances, is no worthy proof of our *Resignation*) and thus considered, it implieth an entire Obedience to the *Preceptive* Will of God. Or, Secondly it relates to hard *Trials*, great hardships and sufferings, such as God doth allot and appoint *to humble us, and to know what is in our hearts*: And thus considered it implieth a meek patience and quiet sub-

*The Introduction.*

submission to the divine *Disposals* and Will of *Providence*.

But I shall not speak to these two distinctly, but joyn them both together in this Aphorism; wherein is comprized the grand Fundamental and Mystery of *Practical Religion*, viz. *That a Christian is to resign his Will wholly to the Will of God, to make an entire Oblation of himself to him.*

In discoursing on which we shall *first* present you with several weighty Considerations that do most effectually recommend to us this *Self-Resignation*: And *secondly* set down such Helps and Directions as are most proper to attain it.

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SECT.

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## S E C T. I.

*Considerations recommending the Duty of  
SELF-RESIGNATION, to our  
most serious and diligent Practice.*

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### C H A P. I.

*That it is the Law of our Creation both first and second. The Consideration of God as a second Creator shewed, mightily to inforce our Engagement to this Duty upon a four-fold account.*

- I.  *Elf-Resignation* is the Law of our Creation; our necessary condition and property, both as we are Creatures, and as New-Creatures; as we are made, and as we are renewed after God's Image. It is not a new thing introduced first by Christ, 'tis not an Institution peculiar to the times of the Gospel, so that for almost four thousand years Man was not obliged to it; but it is our unchangeable property arising from our dependence upon God and relation to him. There is a Law written within us that requires this, nor can any thing free us from our Obligation hereunto. We were made by God for himself, and therefore must needs be under an eternal Obligation to yield universal Obedience to him. This is an old Commandment which man had from the beginning, rooted in and interwoven with his very Being, all the  
the

the Duties enjoined therein are Branches of the everlasting Righteousness, and are of an eternal and unchangeable nature.

Psal. ciii.  
20, 21.

'Tis the Character of *Angels*, that *they do his Commandments, hearkening to the voice of his word, and that they do his will*: And the *Self-Resignation* of *Angels*, their doing God's Will in *Heaven*, is the model of *Mens Resignation* and Obedience on *Earth*; for our Saviour hath taught us thus to pray, *Thy will be done on earth, as it is in heaven*. *Angels* and *Men* are under the same Moral Obligation of Religion, the same Law for substance concerns both. Love is the sum of the whole Law, and *Angels* are to love God with all their might, as well as *Men*, and one *Angel* is to love another as himself.

Religion obligeth every rational and understanding Creature, and the Quintessence of Religion is *Resignation*; and therefore it is impossible this could ever have not been, or should ever for the future cease to be our Duty. *Omnia sunt in manu Cæli, excepto timore Cæli*, was an ancient Maxim of the Hebrew Doctors, implying that God himself cannot absolve and free men from the religious fear and observance of himself, and a most obedient regard to his holy Will.

What the Apostle saith of *Love*, that it is an *old* and yet a *new* Commandment, is true also of this high and holy Commandment of *Self-Resignation*. It is a *new* Commandment; not as if it were first brought in by Christ, as was said, for men were never free to will their own wills, to walk in the ways of their own hearts; but it is *new*, as the Commandment of *Love* is new, in that it was enlivened and enforced anew by *Christ*, had its power and virtue renewed and increased, and

and the engagement to it heightned both by the *Doctrine* and *Example* of our Saviour : Both tending to the advancement of *Self-Resignation* in a way beyond any *Doctrine* or *Example* of Life that ever appeared before or since in the World. And therefore it is also the Law of the *new Creation*, and by virtue thereof its Obligation is now doubled. The Consideration of God as our second Creator mightily inforceth our engagement to this Duty. For,

1. The relation of the *New-Creature* is more *noble and honourable*. In the second Creation the Image of God is repaired in the soul, and man that was a disfigured and disordered thing, by reason of his Apostasie and fall from God, is restored now to that better and more excellent state. As he is a *New-Creature*, he partakes of the Spirit, and is heavenly and spiritual : Which is far more than having a natural Being, by which (as the Apostle speaks) *he is of the earth earthy*. *Ab eo tempore censemur, ex quo in Christo renascimur. S. Jerom in his Epitaph on Nepotianus.*

I Cor. xv.

2. It is also a *sweeter* relation ; there is a most dear Love, to be admired rather than to be express'd, manifested herein, 1 John iii. 1. *Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God. Abba* *Gal. iv. 6,*  
*Father* comes more freely from the lips and heart of the *New-Creature*. Such may draw near to God with a filial freedom, and humble boldness.

3. Besides it is a more *advantageous* relation : For *if children* (saith the Apostle) *then heirs, heirs of God and joynt-heirs with Christ*. And the Inheritance they are heirs to, is *incorruptible and undefiled, reserved in the heavens for them* ; such as eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, and the glory and advantages of which no heart can conceive. Of which according to the abundant grace of the

Rom. viii.  
17.

God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, they are begotten again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection

1 Pet. i. 3. of Jesus Christ from the dead.

4. This new Creation *impowers, capacitates and enables us* for this Duty. These things might be largely insisted upon; but thus much is briefly intimated, that the Obligation to *Self-Resignation* may appear more from the notion of a *New-Creature*, than from that of a *Creature*. And to this purpose is that of the Apostle, Eph. ii. 10. *We are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, created unto intire obedience to the Will of God, the Foundation and also the Sum and Abridgment whereof is Self-Resignation.*

## CHAP. II.

*That Self-Resignation is that which doth eminently difference a good man from the Devil and the wicked: And that mere external Performances do not distinguish between the one and the other.*

II. **S***elf-Resignation* is that which doth eminently difference a good man from the Devil and the wicked. The Angels that would not continue in *Resignation*, that would have another will of their own, that rended their wills from the will of God, they are the evil and miserable Angels; and still they are impetuously acted by a boisterous *Self-Will*, and are impatient of having it checked. \* *Belial* is the Devil's name, and that word signifies *without Yoke*; and the Children of *Belial* are for a boundless lawless liberty, they set themselves against the Lord and his Christ, saying, *Let us break their bands in sunder*  
and

\* *Quasi*  
כִּלְיָ עֵי  
abfq; jugo,  
אֵינוֹ עֵ.  
Psal. ii. 3.

and cast away their cords from us. They altogether break the yoke and burst the bonds, are impatient of restraint. Jer. v. 5.

Wicked men, in whose hearts the Apostate Spirit worketh, are *ὡς οἱ ἀπειθεῖς*, the children of disobedience: they are not for intire subjection to the Divine Will, though wise, good, sure and perfect; but addicted to their own will, which is childish, vain, perverse and boisterous; and all for gratifying their \* many foolish and hurtful desires and longings. They are all for walking after the imagination and stubbornness of their own hearts (a phrase often used in the Prophecy of Jeremiah) and for || fulfilling the wills of the flesh and of the mind. Whereas the children of God are *τὰ υἱὰ ὑπακούσας*, children of obedience, 1 Pet. i. 14. not conformed to their former lusts, but to the will of God, as it was said of David, Acts xiii. 22, 36. Eph. ii. 2. \* Ἐπιδου- μίως πολ- λὰς ἀνοή- τας καὶ βλαβεράς. 1 Tim. vi. 9. Θελήμα- τα. Eph. ii. 3.

And here it is fit to advertise and admonish Christians, that it is a piece of Mystery-Wickedness, a policy of Satan in all ages, to set up and magnifie some pieces of Outward Religion, and put such a value upon them, as from them to denominate men Good and Religious: and so men are reputed Saints and the Children of God by such and such Opinions and Notions, such Expressions, such Observances, such things as may be performed by very bad men. So that on these different Forms are founded different Parties and Sects, and each magnifies its own mode; and thereupon men are tempted and invited to associate and link themselves with one or other, because hereby they shall be reputed Religious, and apologized for by those of that rank and way, and all others shall be unfainted and decried. But

in the mean while the *main* thing is little minded, that which doth intrinsically and eminently difference the good from the wicked, and that is *Self-Resignation*; that which our Saviour makes the essential Character of a true Christian, *Self-Denial*.

\* Now this Doctrine of denying and *resigning* our selves, the Doctrine of the *inward Cross*, of being dead to self-desires and self-interests is very unacceptable and grievous to the Pharisaical and formal Christians; they would fain live to themselves, please themselves, *being lovers of their own selves, covetous, proud, incontinent, fierce, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God*; as the Apostle speaks of some, who hereby denied the *Power of Godliness*, whereof yet they had a *Form*.

Now it is a good service done to Religion to endeavour both by Life and Doctrine, to rescue it from these abuses, from being thought to consist in such outward shews, and to place the Kingdom of God where it should be. It is for the interest of the *pure and undefiled Religion*, and for the advancement of *real Holiness*, to lessen the credit of such appearances, *viz.* such an *habit, tone, form of words*, mere *Outward* performances: to lessen the repute of any sort of *Mock-Holiness*, a mere outward Profession and Observance of only the externals of Religion, be they such as are commanded and appointed by God, or be they mere arbitrary and voluntary tasks, which have a *shew* of Wisdom and Holiness, but *indeed* are a Holiness of their own framing, and a self-chosen Righteousness.

But yet, this is not spoken to lessen the repute of what is external, with a design to make men regard-

regardless thereof, but only to awaken them from *resting* in these externals; to the minding of a greater strictness and holiness, *a righteousness which exceeds the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees*; who were men that were very observant of a many of the Outward parts of Religion, and were strict as to several things that did not cross and prejudice their carnal interests; but yet notoriously loose as to what was most strictly and mainly required by God. And therefore our Saviour in the sixth of *Matthew*, required his Disciples to beware of strengthening that *Babel*, that false imaginary Holiness of the *Pharisees*, who by their specious appearances of *Austerity* and the like, grew into a great reputation among the people, as if there were much of Religion in them.

Among the Externals of Religion, some are of God's own requiring, and suitable to our state and condition here; as, *Praying, reading, preaching, hearing the word, discoursing of it, &c.* Now as for these (not to mention such as men do voluntarily impose upon themselves) we are not to value men as religious by any thing in the use of them, which is common to the regenerate and unregenerate, and may be performed and attained to by the *Hypocrite* or *formal* Christian, who may make a *fair shew in the flesh* and outward part of Religion, and yet be unacquainted with the *spirit and power* of it.

It is the doing these things from a *resigned* heart, so to *pray* as in praying to have an humble submission to the Will of God, so to *read*, so to *preach*, so to *hear*, as to be willing to be formed into all that truth, *the good and acceptable will* of God, this is all in all; this is that which doth distinguish the *formal* and the *real* Christian. Others

can perform all that is outward in Religion, and in such a way as to have the praise of men ; but to deny our selves, to resign our wills entirely to the *Divine Will*, this is proper and peculiar to the inward and *sincere Christian*.

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### CHAP. III.

*That Self-Resignation is the most acceptable way of glorifying God, and that he is honoured by no performances separated from this.*

III. **S**elf-Resignation and a Conformity to the Divine Will is the most excellent, the truest and most acceptable way of glorifying God, and doing honour to him. The greatest honour and respect we can express to an excellent and worthy person is to endeavour to be as *like* him as may be, to imitate him in whatsoever accomplishment commends and represents him justly exemplary.

And the most excellent way of honouring God is to endeavour to be transformed into his likeness, to have our will the same with his, to will as he wills.

Indeed the mere outward Christian thinks that he doth God great honour and service, when he gives him the fruit of his lips in goodly expressions and specious Praises ; when he gives him the fruit of a bodily Worship in multiplying external devotions and religious observances : hereby he thinks he doth highly please God, and oblige him to him, as if God were such an one as himself, and were apt to be taken with such words and shews, and did seek and passionately thirst after such praises and respects. But

But thus to judge of God and deal with him, is really to dishonour him, as much as thou pretendest by this means to honour him : it is plainly called in Scripture a *flattering God*, P<sup>sal</sup> lxxviii. 36. *They remembred God their Rock, and the high God their Redeemer, nevertheless they did flatter him with their mouth, and they lied unto him with their tongues.* It was a good Maxim of the Pythagoreans, *Thou shalt then in the most excellent and becoming way glorifie and honour God, when in thy mind, thine inward man, thou art like to God* : When thou art affected as God is affected, when thou wiltst as he wills, art willing to have that destroyed in thee which is contrary to the Divine Nature.

Τιμιότης  
τ' Θεὸν ἀ-  
είσα, ἰδὲ  
τὰ Θεοῦ  
τ' δίδωμι-  
αὐ ὁμοίω-  
σας.

That which the *Chaldee Paraphrast* doth gloss on those words in P<sup>sal</sup>. l. ult. *who so offereth praise glorifieth me*, is very pertinent, viz. *who so subdues and destroys* **יִצִּירָא בִישָׁא** the principle of inordinate affection in him, it shall be accounted to him as **קִרְבָּן מוֹרְתָא** a sacrifice of praise. The mortifying of earthly members, the slaying undue desires, corrupt interests, and uncurbed affections is more, infinitely more, pleasing than all those costly and pompous Services under the Law ; than the utmost that the Lip-service and Tongue-devotion can make shew of.

That great bulk of Rites and Ceremonies, those burthensome Services under the Law, those multitudes of Sacrifices of Bulls, Goats, Lambs, &c. they did not, they could not avail, were but mean inconsiderable things and vain cost, without the inward Sacrifice of an heart sweetly, sincerely, kindly ingenuously affected towards God. This, *this heart, such a temper of Spirit did* \* *please the Lord, better than a bullock that hath horns and hoofs.* \* *Behold to obey is bet-*

\* P<sup>sal</sup> lxxix.  
31.  
\* 1 Sam.  
xv. 22.

ter than Sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of Rams, the best of the Sacrifice.

*Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of Rams, and ten thousands of rivers of oil? with multitudes of outward Services and bodily Austerities, with long Fastings or Prayings, or Prophesying in his Name, with large Discourses, glorious Expressions, vehement Disputings, or the like? these he shall have, any thing shall be given rather than the Sin of the Soul, the corrupt will should be destroyed. But it is the walking with God in Humility and Resignation, which is that good thing which God hath shewed thee; O man, and which the Lord thy God requireth of thee.*

Micah vi.  
6, 7, 8.

Prov. xxi.  
27.

*The Sacrifice of the wicked, those whose wills are opposite to the Will of God, is an abomination unto the Lord.*

And now under the Gospel-state, wherein those Legal and Carnal Ordinances are ceased, our more seemingly *Spiritual* Exercises of Religion, our *Prayings*, our *Fastings*, our *saying Lord, Lord*, and *naming the name of Christ*, and great Profession of Christianity, and all other religious outward observances are but fruitless empty things, of no account with God, utterly unavailable, except there be at the bottom of all a *Resigned heart*.

As St. James saith, *If any man seemeth to be religious and bridleth not his tongue, so is it most true, If any man seemeth to be religious and bridleth not his Will, which is more hard, that mans Religion is vain.*

## C H A P. IV.

*That Self-Resignation is the way to light even in the greatest difficulties and perplexities: whether they be in reference to our duty, or in reference to our condition and state.*

IV. **F**ourthly, *Self-Resignation* is the way to light, and that in the greatest difficulties and darkest perplexities. There is a kind of *Divine Oracle* within the *Self-resigning Soul* which speaks clearly and plainly, not darkly and ambiguously, as that Oracle in *Greece*. There is a *Spiritual Priesthood* which hath the *Urim* and *Thummim* (not upon the breast as *Aaron* had, but) within the breast: *Light* and *Integrity* go together. *The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew them his Covenant*: or, as it is better in the *Margent*, and his *Covenant* to make them know it. That is, it is part of God's gracious *Covenant*, not to conceal from them, but to make them know his *Will*. That which concerns them to know and practise, God will not hide from the sincerely obedient. Psal. xlv. 14.

God makes such to know *Wisdom in the hidden part*, or in the *hidden man of the heart*, to use *St. Peter's phrase*. Psal. li. 6.

That may safely be understood, and is most true of the *Self-resigning Soul*, which the *Son of Syrach* doth affirm, *Chap. 37. 13. Let the counsel of thine own heart stand, for there is no man more faithful unto thee than it: for a mans mind is sometime wont to tell him more than seven watchmen that sit above in an high tower.*

But to speak more particularly. Where this in-

inward Principle of *Self-Resignation* is, there are the fewest doubts and perplexities; or in case of such doubts, there are the speediest and surest resolutions.

Now the Doubts and Sollicitudes, that perplex and disquiet Christians, may be chiefly ranked under these two heads: They are either about their *Duty*, or about their *State*.

And in both, *Self-Resignation* is the way to Light, and affords the greatest advantages of knowing aright.

1. *Be the doubts and perplexities about our Duty, what we are to do*: The *Self-resigning* Soul is in the best disposition to give a right judgment in this case, is the best prepared to receive Divine Light, and the guidance of God's Counsel.

1. *This Soul is best prepared to receive Divine Light*. Such a Soul is wholly made for Obedience and quiet Submission to the Will of God: it is brought up at the feet of Christ, sits there (with *Mary*) in the posture and Spirit, and all the becoming qualities of a willing and obedient Disciple; and the Teacher of Souls will not neglect to shew unto such the path of life. God will write his Law in the humble and obedient heart; the Laws and Rules of Life and Obedience shall be written within it by the Spirit of the Living God. Those Eternal Characters of Goodness and Righteousness which are in the mind of God are copied out and transcribed in the Soul of a *Resigned* Christian. *We have the mind of Christ*, saith the Apostle, 1 Cor. 2. ult. *The meek shall be guide in judgment, the meek shall be teach his way*, Psal. 25. 9. And those Letters are not dead Letters, like those written with Ink and Paper; but they are living Characters, as they are in God, and writ  
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on living tables. They are *the Law of the Spirit of Life*, an inward living Principle in such Souls. Rom. viii. 2.

Again, the *Self-resigning* Soul is still and silent before the Lord: Lusts and corrupt Interests are here quelled and silenced, which make a continual noise and clamour in the unregenerate, and *un-resigned*, by their importunate Sollicitations, and fill them with din and tumult, and therefore such a Soul is better prepared to hear God coming to it in the *still small voice*, as once he did to *Elias*, 1 Kings 19.

Those soft and gentle Whispers of the Spirit, *Vena Divini murmuris*, as *Prudentius* calls them, those inward manifestations of himself are best discerned and attended to in this solemn silence. When the Wind is high, and beats upon the windows and doors of the house, it is hard to hear what is said within. All tumultuous and boisterous passions must be calmed, and the Soul be in a state of due stilness and tranquillity to hear what God speaks to it. And when this is the language of our hearts, (as it was of *Samuel*) *Speak Lord, for thy servant heareth*, then it is that we hear a voice behind us saying, *this is the way, walk in it*. And thus shall *the path of the righteous be as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day*, Prov. 4. 18.

2. The *Self-resigning Soul* is in the best disposition to give a right judgment, and so discern the Will of God. When men are *unresigned*, unwilling to be wholly God's, and have some design and interest to serve contrary to the design of Christ, and Righteousness, and are passionately and eagerly carried out to it, it is no wonder if they err in their hearts, and know not the way of God, the way wherein he hath declared he will have them to

to walk : For they are easily brought to fancy that to be right which they strongly *will*, and to judge things to be *thus* from their impetuous *willing* them to be thus. And it is just with God to give them up to an injudicious and undiscerning mind, so that things appear to them, not as they are, but as they would have them to appear ; not according to their own inward form and nature, but according to the lusts of their own heart. Lusts and Passions cast such a mist before our minds, that we cannot see our way, nor well discern between good and evil.

It is easie to observe, that the same men when they are free from Temptations, and from under the power of Passions, clearly see many things to be evil, and condemn them, which at other times they will not be convinc'd are so, but pronounce the quite contrary concerning them. Therefore the *Self-resigning* Christian, having that subdued in him that would tempt him to judge amiss, is in the ready way to the clearest discerning the Will of God. What is said of Christ is, according to his measure, true of a faithful Christian, *he is of a quick understanding in the fear of the Lord* of a quick *scent* or *smell*, as the Hebr. ח'פ' doth import, of a more *sagacious* spirit ; he hath a more exact *νευρίσιον*, *his senses are spiritually exercised to discern both good and evil*.

Isa. xi. 3.

Heb. v.  
ult.

Such as are not conformed to this world, but transformed by the renewing of their minds, shall prove and discern what is that good, acceptable and perfect Will of God, Rom. xii. 2.

Unpurified reason and understanding is far from being a sure and safe guide and director about the *τὸ δεῖον*, *what ought to be done* ; for it looks at what is profitable, rather than at what is honest. Though

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it may be quick enough to discern in matters merely *speculative* and *notional*, yet it is very apt to miscarry in *Morals* and matters of *Practice*. But a good understanding have all they that do his *Commandments*; a better light shines into holy and purged hearts, and in this light they see light, and the day-star is risen in their hearts. Psal. cxi.  
ult.

This is the Privilege of the *Self-resigning* Soul, that knows no Will of its own divided from the Will of God, and would not will any thing, but what he doth will; such a Soul shall understand the fear of the Lord, and hath great and frequent occasions of saying with *David*, I will bless the Lord who hath given me counsel. Prov. ii.  
5.  
Psal. xvi.  
7.

2. Be the doubts about our Condition and State, what it is to God-ward, and in reference to Eternity: as *S. James* speaks, *Whence come Wars and fightings?* I may add, *Whence come those fears, anxieties and uncertainties, that are to be observed in many about the state of their Souls, those fears that have torment in them, come they not from hence, even from the lusts that war in their members?* One lust often wars against another, *scelera dissident*; but all war against the Soul. Ch. iv. 1.

Are not most of those tormenting fears and troubles in Christians to be resolved into the want of an entire *Self-Resignation*, as the proper and true ground? Men will not come off thoroughly to this, they would be indulged in some thing or other, and yet would be at peace and rest; they would be cured of their distemper, and yet are unwilling to have the root of it taken away. Consider therefore, is there not something of *Self-will* that works and is too powerful within thee? Wouldest thou not be *unresigned*, and please thy self in this or that thing? dost thou not say with

*Naaman*

*Naaman the Syrian, the Lord pardon thy servant in this thing?* and as *Lot* in another case, *is it not a little one?* If this be so, God, who seeth the heart, seeth all this, and he will not be mocked, nor be bribed to give thee peace in thy making a great shew of being subdued and *resigned* in other things.

But if by the power of God's Grace our Wills be intirely subjected to the Divine Will, we cannot have the least reason upon any account whatsoever to torment our selves with anxious thoughtfulness about our state; we may be sure that the *outward* Hell shall not be our portion if we are delivered from the Hell *within*; and that we cannot miss of the Heaven *above*, while we have a Heaven *within* us, and are put into a fit disposition for it by a free *Resignation* to the Will of God. They to whom the doing God's Will is connatural, and their meat and drink *have eternal life*, as in the Epistles of St. *John* the phrase is more than once; they in a lower degree live the life of Souls in Glory, are affected as they are, and have the disposition and temper of Heaven.

Indeed it is as impossible for Souls, whose sincere care it is to purifie themselves as God is pure, and onely to will as he wills, to be in *Hell*, as it is for impure, self-willed and disobedient Souls to be in *Heaven*: 'Tis as impossible for *Love, Peace, Long-suffering, Gentleness, Goodness, Faith, Meekness, Temperance*, and the like fruits of the Spirit, to be in *Hell*, as it is for *Unclean-ness, Lasciviousness, Hatred, Strife, Wrath, Envyings, Cruelty, Unrighteousness*, and the like works of the Flesh, to grow in *Heaven*. That Soul cannot be miserable, and is incapable of the

Hellish

Hellish state which is intirely *resigned*; for such a Soul dwelleth in love, and therefore in God, and God in him: Nor can the infinitely good God abandon and cast off any Soul that cleaveth to him with full purpose of heart, and preferreth his Will above her chief Joy. Thirstings and holy breathings after the enjoyment of God, God-like dispositions, and a frame of heart agreeable to the heart of God, cannot fail to be united to him their Original.

1 Joh. iv.  
16.

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C H A P. V.

*That Self-Resignation is the way to rest and peace: That those that have attained thereunto find satisfaction and pleasure both in doing, and suffering, the Will of God: That it procures outward as well as inward peace; and that Self-willedness is that which puts the World into Confusion.*

V. **S**elf-Resignation is the way to true Peace, Rest and Joy; Joy unspeakable, as St. Peter calls it; Peace which passeth all understanding, as St. Paul. By the way observe, that neither words nor thoughts can reach Spiritual Excellencies, this is their sole priviledge that they can never be over-valued, over-praised. Other things we may easily speak too highly of, but we can never invent too magnificent expressions concerning these; we cannot raise mens expectations too high concerning them; they will ever prove better then they are reported to be. It will be said by the Soul that comes to know these things by experience, as it was by the Queen of Sheba, *Behold half was not told me.*

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This *Self-Resignation*, I say, it is the way to an holy rest, to the *Sabbatum cordis*, the Sabbath of the heart, as St. *Austin* calls it. If thou wilt enjoy the true rest, and keep the inward Sabbath, *thou must not do thine own ways, nor speak thine own words, nor find thine own pleasure*; to borrow those words in *Isaiah* lviii. Thou must *cease from thine own works*; as the phrase is, *Hebr. iv. 10.* All desire *rest, peace, and pleasure*, but no where shall we find it, but in *yielding our selves to God*; and that it is to be found in this way, our Saviour hath told his Disciples, *Mat. xi. 29. Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, and ye shall find rest to your Souls.*

In taking Christ's Yoke upon us, in bearing his burden, in a sincere, free and entire obedience to his Laws, in learning of him who was meek and lowly in heart, a pliable and obedient frame and temper of spirit, we shall undoubtedly find the sweetest ease and tranquillity of mind.

As the Soul groweth in *Resignation*, it returns more to its rest, it comes to be more as it would be by being more restored towards its original constitution, its first state. Man was made after God's Image, and while his Will was the same with the Divine Will, he dwelt in peace and joy: But when he would needs have a Will of his own divided from the Will of God, in falling from *Resignation*, he fell also from peace and rest, into trouble, fears, shame and confusion.

The *Resigned* Soul enjoys Religion in all the Sweetnesses and Priviledges of it, it is prepared *to taste and see how good the Lord is*; and the more a man is conformed to the Will of God, and grows in Obedience, the more he enjoys the *peaceable fruits of Righteousness*. To him that  
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*overcometh* (that overcometh his own Will, those Lusts that war against his Soul) *shall be given the hidden Manna, the white stone with a new name in it, known by him only that receiveth it; and a stranger intermeddleth not with his joy.* Such an one hath meat which the world knows not of, and is fed with the food of Angels. Rev. ii. 17.  
Prov. xiv. 10.

Those which have the Holy Spirit for their Guide, shall undoubtedly have him for their Comforter. *The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever,* Is. xxxij. 17.

A man can have no peace that lodgeth and cherisheth his deadly Enemy in his bosom; it cannot be well with him in whom *Selfness*, the morbidick Matter, and root of all Distempers, abounds. Self-desires and Lusts are the diseases of the Soul, they are the corrupt humours that disturb the inward man; and till these be purged out there can be no health, no soundness, no joy, no rest. Inordinate Self-love breeds perpetual tumults and disorders in our breasts; for having many appetites to be satisfied, so long as any of them are crost or not fully pleased, (as they can never be) they must necessarily be very troublesome; but a sweet Calm and composure of Soul enters in with *Self-Resignation*; and it must needs so do, as it removes the cause of trouble and disquiet.

There is indeed pain in the first tearing off our Wills from those things they cleaved and stuck fast to: As it is said of the Milch-kine that drew the Ark, their Calves being shut up, they went lowing all the way that they went to *Beth-shemesh*; so it is with Souls in their passage to *Resignation*, they then parting with what was dear to them,

fondly beloved, and eagerly pursued by them, with that which was their life and nature. But they are no sooner arrived at this state, but the bitterness of death is past, the bitterness of the death of the Old corrupt man, the hour of travel is over, and they remember no more the anguish, for joy that the New man created after the Image of God is born within them. They have now broken through the difficulties in the way, are got out of the Wilderness over *Jordan*, and their feet are on the holy Land, *the Land of righteousness and rest*. The ways of Religion are not, as before, grievous, but paths of peace and pleasantness, flowry and sweet, rosie and soft ways.

Religion is now become their temper, constitution and life, and sin is grievous, strange, and hard to them. 'Tis not so troublesom to them to be patient as to be passionate, to forgive as to revenge; Humility is more easie to them than Pride, Sobriety than Intemperance, Chastity and Purity are more sweet than Lust and Sensuality; and the like may be said of the other Graces and Vertues. It is no longer well with them than while they are true to *Resignation*; when at any time they fail here, they are sensible they take great hurt, they find themselves immediately ill at ease. To the Self-resigning Soul Christ's Commandments are so far from being grievous, that the inward voice of such a Soul is, *I delight to do thy Will, O my God*; the Divine Will is its just satisfaction, its full content, joy and pleasure.

And as the *jugum legis*, the yoke of Christ's Law, so the *jugum crucis*, the yoke of his Cross, is not grievous to the *Self-resigned*. He saith, with his Saviour, *the Cup which my Father giveth me to drink shall I not drink it?* Let God feed him with

bitter-

bitterness and wormwood, yet his meditation of him is sweet : his spirit is not embittered against the Divine Providence, he is still and silent before the Lord : He possesseth his Soul with patience, and often also with *joyfulness*.

It is sweet and pleasant to a Christian to find himself willing to be without that which he desired, and to suffer that which he was most averse to, and goes most against the hair, when after his requests made known to God by Prayer and Supplication, and making known his troubles and difficulties to others with desire of their help, and other due means used, it appears to be the Will of God that he should have such trials, and continue in such circumstances. How sweet is such a temper of Patience to the Soul ! 'tis far sweeter than the obtaining and enjoying of that we desire.

But as for the Unresigned, his impatience and *Self-willedness* makes his Cup more bitter, and his Cross whatever it is, far heavier than it is in itself. To such an one even the Grasshopper is a burden, and a light affliction intolerable. He is sick for this or that, as *Ahab* was for *Naboth's* Vineyard, and will not be satisfied without it ; he is fowred with discontent, and his spirit is embittered against Providence. He would be carried through the world in a *Sedan*, nor is he able to bear being jogged or disturbed in the way ; so distempered, crazy and rotten is he.

I may in the close of this add, That *Self-Resignation* is the way to peace among men, and that it is stiff *Self-willedness* which puts the world into Confusions, and makes it so uncomfortable, so uninhabitable a place. Men that are passionately carried out to please themselves, are neither them-

Τετάρτη  
καὶ πέμπτη,  
James iii. 6.

*selves* at rest, nor will they suffer *others* so to be. These create differences, heighten animosities, blow the coals of strife, are ready to set on fire *the course of nature*, or the wheel of affairs; and from the abounding of such comes complaining and crying in our streets. From this *Self-will* it is that we cannot sit down quietly under our own Vine, and our own Fig-tree: and from hence it is that the World is become a great *Akeldama*, a Field of Bloud, and a Vale of Tears.

Those that despise Government, and speak evil of Dignities are such as are presumptuous and *self-willed*, 2 Pet. 2. 10.

They that make the times perillous are such as in the first place are called φιλαυτοί; *Lovers of their own selves*, 2 Tim. 3. 1.

## CHAP. VI.

*That Self-Resignation is the way to true Liberty and Freedom of Spirit; and the contrary to perfect Slavery and Thraldome.*

VI. **S***elf-Resignation* is the way to true liberty and freedom of spirit; which confirms the former. That which some call *freedom and liberty*, namely, *to walk in the ways of their own heart, and in the sight of their eyes*, is in truth straitness, bondage, and perfect slavery. The Apostle *Peter* saith, *that of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage*. But he that lives to the pleasing his own will is overcome of Pride, Envy, Covetousness, unruly Passions, fleshly or spiritual Lusts, and therefore is in bondage to them. Wicked men are described as *serving divers lusts and*

Titus iii. 3.

plea-

*pleasures*; not one, but many Lords, and these such as to be under the power of whom is a most ignominious and shameful bondage. *But if the Son make us free, we shall be free indeed*, free with a true and excellent freedom. Now he makes men free by delivering them from their *Self-will*: By bringing them to will as his Father and he willeth: by uniting their wills with those things that are intrinsically, immutably and indispensably holy; things which are in their own nature good: By enabling them to act conformably to the Idea of everlasting and unchangeable righteousness and goodness. But those that would have nothing unchangeably good or evil to *them*, that would live as they list in giving indulgence to the flesh, and fulfilling it in the lusts thereof, they affect such a kind of *freedom* as God himself hath not; and therefore that which is utterly unworthy of so excellent a name, and is indeed the vilest and most intolerable slavery.

The Commands of Sin are most tyrannical and unreasonable; never was poor Israelite so abused by *Egyptian* Task-masters, as the Soul of man is by sensual Lusts; they command impetuously and cruelly, and one or other of them is continually putting upon such offices and employments as are no less contrary to freedom than to the excellency and dignity of our nature. To be acted by hot and eager Ambition, or greedy and unsatiable Covetousness, or a vehement thirst after bodily Pleasures, what a miserable bondage and servitude must it needs be to the free and heaven-born Spirit of man.

But there is no such liberty as to be free to good, and enlarged to spiritual Obedience. He that is so hath an Empire within him, he is in his own

\* Nulla est  
major vi-  
toria  
quam qua  
de cupidi-  
tatibus re-  
fertur.

power, he hath victory over the world, both the good and evil things of it: His mind is unhampered, disintangled and set loose, and it is Lord over those whom it before obeyed. *Solomon* expresseth the excellency of the freedom this man enjoyeth in these words, *He that ruleth his own spirit* (or passions) *is better than he who taketh a City*, Prov. xvi. 32. \* *There is no victory more glorious than that whereby we become Conquerours over inordinate affections*, saith *St. Cyprian*.

Nor is there any Victory so glorious.

To do good with a free and willing spirit, with readines of mind, and without reluctance is the most glorious of liberties; and this is the happy consequent of *Self-Resignation*.

For the farther clearing of this grand Truth, know that God is not cruel or over-severe in his restraint of our Wills. He doth not like *Rhoboaam* and wicked Rulers affect to lay any unmerciful burdens and loads on men: Nor doth he, as one ambitious to shew his Superiority and absolute Sovereignty over us, give out his Laws and Commands meerly for his own will and pleasure. But be we possess with this important Truth, *That the business of Religion is wholly for the good of man*; therein God seeks not any advantage that may accrue to himself, for he is Self-happy, All-sufficient, and an infinitely perfect Being. *He is not worshipt with mens hands, as though he needed any thing*, Acts xvii. 25. *Our goodness extendeth not unto him*, Psalm xvi. 2. *If thou be righteous what givest thou him, or what receiveth he at thine hands?* Job xxxv. 7. In all his injunctions he seeks the good, the well-being, the spiritual interest of his Creatures.

We cannot hurt God by our *Self-willedness* and Disobedience, but we shall thereby most certainly wrong our selves, destroy our own Souls; and knowing that this pleasing our own will is no better than sweet poison, the Lover of our Souls warns us of the danger of so doing.

In short thus: God most Holy and Wise, our Creator and Lord, as he is worthy and most fit to give us a Law and Rule to walk by, so is that he hath given us most *holy, just and good*. He doth not command us any thing, nor is there any thing in that Law written in mens hearts, and more fully declared in the Holy Scripture, but it is absolutely better for us to be obliged to the observance of it than otherwise; nor hath he forbidden us any thing, but it is absolutely better for us that it should not be allowed us than that it should be; (as would be easie to demonstrate by enumerating the particular Commands and Prohibitions declared in the Gospel) and therefore it cannot be doubted but that the truest *Liberty* consists in the Resignation of our Wills to the Divine Will.

This excellent and weighty Truth is most clearly discerned by the *Self-resigning* Soul; for he never feels himself so free, or so much master of himself, and in his own power, as when he is engaged in God's Service. But the *Natural* (that is the *Sensual*) man cannot receive this Doctrine, and it is foolishness to him. He looks upon the Laws of his Creator and Redeemer as too nice and severe, and the entire observance of them as unnecessary and troublesome strictness, as if the Wisdom of God did not better know the just bounds and measures, where man was to be restrained, and where he might be indulged than he doth: As if God did not best know what be-

longs to humane nature, and the ordering and regulating mens affections and actions: As if there were envy in the infinitely good God, ill will and an evil eye towards us in denying us any thing that is for our good. But to suppose this, to have such an inward thought is blasphemy in an high degree.

It becomes us therefore to have our minds deeply affected with this Truth, That it cannot be Liberty to be loose from God; the substance of all he commands us being in its own nature unchangeably good, and all his Laws being such as it is most fit for us to be governed by: That both his Commands and Restraints proceed from his tender love, and care of us.

Though Souls as yet unskilful and unexperienced in Religion do not understand thus much at first, but are apt to think that God might have dealt less severely with them than he hath done, yet they come to be of another mind when they are once grown up to good maturity in Christ; then they evidently see that all God commands or forbids was out of the most tender Goodness: And therefore what at first was grievous to them becomes their choice; nor do they wish to be indulged in this or that which is forbidden; nor that they might be free from this or that which is commanded. They esteem (with *David*) *all God's precepts concerning all things to be right*: They do not think the way too strait or narrow that leads to life, nor wish it broader than it is: They do not wish the yoke and burden of Christ to be more easie or lighter than it is; all they wish is, that they were more strong to bear it, to obey more chearfully and constantly. They *choose* the Way of God's Precepts, they  
choose

choose it as that which best tends in it self to their happiness and welfare. That which grieveth them is, that they are not so strong in Obedience as they should be, and pray for Grace to enable them to obey better; but they seek not an indulgence or relaxation. They know for certain that the onely way to have their wills, is to give and *resign* them to God: And that it is for their *own* advantage not *God's*, that he calls for their hearts; and that he requires them for this end, that he may fill them with true peace, rest, and Heaven. That he commands them to quit and forsake their false selves, that they may enjoy their best and true selves; that he forbids them to gratifie that which the world accounts *Self-love*, because it is indeed no other than *Self-hatred*.

The great foundation of mens backwardness to receive this Doctrine, is their mistake of that which they call *themselves*, their generally valuing themselves by their *Body*, and their reference to this present world; by which means they are chiefly carried out in their affections towards the things thereof, to the pleasing the *Body*, and satisfying its appetites though never so unreasonable and prejudicial to their *Souls* welfare. The vulgar opinion is, that the *Body* is the *Man*, and consequently to love the *Body* is for a man to love *himself*, and to *make provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof*, is to make provision for *himself*.

But the Ancient and wisest Philosophers, as also the Primitive *Greek* Fathers especially, and great Lights of the Church, would not so much as allow the *Body* to be one half or part of the *Man*: But this was their sense, *Animus cujusque is est quisque*, Every man's *Soul* is he; and, *Ἄνθρωπος*

*ἄσματος ἔστιν ὃ ᾤτο τὸ ἐξόματον* The man is not that part which is seen : and the Holy Scripture puts **W**<sup>B</sup> Soul for the person very frequently. Man is a Creature that can think, reason and understand ; and that which doth this is the *Soul* onely, and therefore this is the true *Man*. To do acts proper to a *Man* is above the power of *Body* or matter ; and therefore the *Body* is called by those low names of an *house* and *tabernacle* wherein the *Soul* dwelleth, both in the holy *Scripture* and the *Writings* of *Philosophers*.

Upon this account God (though he allows us to provide for the necessities and due conveniences of the *Body*) forbids us to love our *Bodies* better than our *Souls*, or equally with them ; and permits us not to satisfy the cravings of our bodily appetites to the hurt and damage of our *Souls*. And all the declarations of his will concerning us are for the great end of restoring to the *Soul* its dominion over the *Body* and sensual part, and maintaining its dignity and superiority.

And when it is able so to do by cleaving to God, and willing as he wills, its slavery ceaseth, and it hath recovered true amplitude, largeness and liberty. *I will walk at liberty*, (saith the Psalmist) *for I seek thy precepts*, Psal. cxix. 95. *Adam* affecting to be loose from the will of God, thought to have gained more liberty, but he was sadly mistaken ; for he hereby became a poor contracted and straitned thing. *David* would once be free to gratifie the unwarrantable desires of his heart ; but by this licentious and false freedom he lost the true, he miserably sunk himself into a poor narrow and slavish spirit : And therefore he prays that God would *renew a right spirit within him* ; and that he would *establish him with a free spirit*, Psal. li. 10, 12.

## C H A P. VII.

*That Self-Resignation is the Sum of the Gospel-Commands; That all the Ordinances of the Gospel, and even Faith it self, are in order to this.*

VII. **S**elf-Resignation is the Sum of the Gospel-Commands, the *totum hominis*, the whole Concernment of a Christian. If there be any other Commandment, (as the Apostle saith of Love) it is briefly comprehended in this, *Thou shalt resign thy self, thou shalt deny thine own will, and surrender it up to the Divine Will.* This is the great Lesson in the School of Christ: *He (saith our Saviour) that will be my Disciple must deny himself, and take up his cross and follow me.*

As Plato would have it written upon his School-door, *Let none enter that is unskilled in Geometry*; so this is the most proper Motto for the School of Christ, *Let none enter in here that is not resolved on Resignation.* Lord, what wouldst thou have me to do? (as it was S. Paul's first saying to Christ) is the first Lesson to be minded by all his Disciples.

And as it is the *Alpha*, so is it the *Omega* also; 'tis both the first and the last lesson of Christianity: All is done when this is done, and till this lesson be learnt, all that we have done or learnt signifies but very little. When we have well gotten this, we are Disciples indeed: 'Tis not the saying, *Lord, Lord, but the doing the will of God* that will give us that title.

'Tis observable that in *Rom. xii.* (a Chapter as full and thick set with practical Rules, as richly fraught with divine Morality, and matters of Christian Practice, as any one Chapter in the Epistles)

μὴ εἰσελθεῖς  
ἐνταῦθα  
ὁ μὴ θέλων  
ἀποδοῦναι  
τὸν ἑαυτόν

Mat. vii.

pistles) I say, 'tis observable that in this Chapter the Apostle describing and inculcating the most excellent and becoming instances of Practical Christianity, sets this first as comprehensive of all the particular duties mentioned afterwards, viz. *the giving up our selves as a sacrifice and entire oblation to God*, v. 1. *I beseech you by the mercies of God that ye present your bodies* (that is your selves, bodies being here put for the whole man, because of the decorous allusion to the bodies of Beasts offered in Sacrifice under the Law) *a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service*. In this general Exhortation (together with the words following, which are an illustration of it) is summ'd up whatsoever is particularly mentioned in the following verses, relating to the practice of the several graces required of a Christian in this world. From hence flow the particular duties hereafter exprest, and they are all contained herein as in the seed and root. Plainly thus----If ye give up your selves as an entire Oblation to God, and so your will is resigned to his, and not conformed to this world, *Ye will shew mercy with chearfulness, love without dissimulation, be fervent in spirit; you will rejoyce in hope, be patient in tribulation, and continue instant in prayer: you will distribute to the necessity of Saints, and be given to hospitality: ye will not recompence evil with evil, but overcome evil with good: ye will as much as in you lieth live peaceably with all men*. And so for all other duties which concern a Christians life in this world.

So that the Root, the Basis and Foundation of Christian Practice is *Self-Resignation*, and from it may be expected every duty and act of a religious life.

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There is nothing difficult in Christianity but this one thing, when our Wills are once resigned, all other duties will flow as naturally from us, as streams from a Fountain.

Let me add, that *Prayer* and all the *Ordinances* of the Gospel are in order to this; the business of them all is to fasten and unite our Wills more and more firmly and inseparably to the Divine Will.

And even that great and high grace of *Faith*, it is wholly subservient to the attainment of this *Self-Resignation*. The design of Faith in the power of God is to encourage us to go forth against those *Anakims*, those lusts that war against our Souls, that at last all may be destroyed in the mind and will of man which is contrary to the Will of God; and that we may be perfectly free to obedience.

And as for Faith in the Goodness and Mercy of God in Christ as to the pardon of Sin, the end of that is not merely that we may have a sense of our being forgiven, but it hath a farther aim, viz. that we being delivered from anxious and tormenting fears about the pardon of our sins, may love God and Christ more, may obey more, and our obedience may be more free, ingenuous, natural, and constant, as that is which flows from Love.

In a word, Faith looks at the *Divine Promises*, that thereby we may be partakers of the *Divine Nature*; for to this end were the *Promises* given, 2 Pet. i. 3. And to this end they are to be applied: And when we partake of the Divine Nature, our Wills become one with the Divine Will.

## C H A P. VIII.

*That Self-Resignation is that wherein consisteth the power of Godlineſſ; and that, as it diſtinguiſheth both from the inſincere and the weak Chriſtian.*

VIII. **T**HIS *Self-Resignation* (as is manifeſt by the laſt Chapter) is that wherein conſiſteth the *Power of Godlineſſ*; 'tis the great inſtance, proof, and expreſſion of it.

By the *Power of Godlineſſ* I do not mean that only which is oppoſed to an empty form and ſlight appearance of Godlineſſ, but alſo Godlineſſ in its ſtrength and vigour, that which is *powerful* as well as *ſincere* and *real*. To ſuffer no Will to rule in us, but what is agreeable to God's Will; to regulate all our inordinate deſires and unruly paſſions, to croſs their cravings, and to have the love of the world and all Self-love overcome in us, theſe are the worthy Atchievements of thoſe Souls who are ſtrong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Theſe are the mighty Acts of thoſe Chriſtians that quit themſelves like men; theſe are the *Magnalia*, the great things of Religion.

1. This *Self-Resignation* is the only expreſſion of that power of Godlineſſ that differeth from the *false* and *inſincere* Chriſtians. Theſe are, as the *Publicans* and *Sinners*, ſo the *Phariſees* and *formal*. To die to their own will, and *through the Spirit to mortifie all the deeds of the body*, is death indeed to theſe, and the King of Terrors. The ſeparation of their hearts from the luſts they have cleaved to is like the ſeparation of Soul and body to them, and their ſpirits and lives declare that (as much as they may excel in ſome com-

commendable things ) here they are sadly short.

And it is worth our observation, that these people being inwardly conscious of their deficiency herein, love to represent some outward Observances in Religion as high and hard matters; some things that any carnal man may do if he please, as well as they, as the great instances of the *power of Godliness*.

The phrase is very common both in their Lips and Books, but it is not therefore to be found in their spirits and lives. They are not able to hide their being acted by, and under the power of either sins of the *flesh* or of the *spirit*. They cannot so artificially ape a Christian, as not to bewray an inordinate affection to the world, either the profits, pleasures or honours of it, and, in too many instances, a Will unresigned to his, whose Disciples and Followers they pretend to be. And from what hath been discoursed it therefore appears, that the *power of Godliness* is but a word in fashion among them, a meer sound, *named*, but not *known* and *experimented* by them. There is a *form of Godliness* which may very well agree with the *power of Self-will*: And men may discover a great zeal for this or that mode and way, for these or those opinions, and against some certain sins, profess a great love to Christ, faith in his merits, and zeal for his honour; they may speak in such a strain of words as is wonderfully taking with the vulgar, have notable gifts in discoursing about the things of God, and in praying to him, and herein discover much life and affection: They may strain at Gnats, and be very scrupulous in some small and disputable things, and yet be *self-lovers*, seek, relish and please themselves, be *lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God*, covetous, *envious*,

*envious, proud, high-minded, unrighteous, unfaithful, unmerciful, uncharitable; and such as are any one of these, for all their specious forms, are perfect strangers to the power of Godliness.*

Now I would offer that Question of our Saviour, *τί περισσὸν ποιεῖτε*, *what do ye more than others?* What excellent, what difficult thing, such as is worthy to be thought an instance of the *power of Godliness*, do ye? You constantly, it may be, frequent the publick Worship of God, you hear God's Word, and read the Bible and religious Books frequently, you pray in your Closets and with your Families, you do not run with the profane to their excess of riot: these are good things (and woe be to them that despise or neglect the external duties of Religion) but if you do no more than this comes to, what extraordinary thing do you? May not any man void of the Spirit do the same?

Thou canst pray without the same form of words, thou canst dispute and discourse about matters of Religion, and in such a way as is apt to affect others; thou canst deny thy self in some things which will not disadvantage thy more beloved sins, thou dost reform in some things, as to outward garb and deportment: but in all this, *what dost thou more than others?* Shall the *power of Godliness* be placed in those things which meer outward notional Christians and unregenerate persons may be as ready and dextrous in as others? Alas! what are all these and the like to that which the Scripture calls *cutting off the right hand, plucking out the right eye, selling all for the pearl of great price?* What are these to the *mortifying of earthly members, to the crucifying of the body of sin, to the being dead to sin?* All which expres-

expressions are not to be look'd upon as high Metaphors, or Hyperbolical Schemes of Speech, but as sober realities, and our necessary duty. And these are the things wherein that *power of Godliness* shineth forth, which distinguisheth between those that are indeed alive, and those which have onely a name to live.

Thou shewest that thou hast read much, and heard much, hast had good Education, hast kept good company, and art of good natural parts: but how hast thou prospered in *Self-Resignation*? Art thou more crucified to the world? Hast thou more power over thy Spirit? Is the power of thy *Self-will* more broken? Art thou more free and ingenuous in thy obedience? God looks at the heart, the temper and quality of the mind, the difference between men and men is mainly within, in the influences and impressions of Religion upon their spirits, in its bettering their inward frame, and by this means mending the outward conversation and course of life.

2. *Self-Resignation* is likewise the onely proof of the *power of Godliness* in the second sense, that (as was said) which differenceth *strong* from *weak* Christians, those that are grown nearer to a perfect stature in Christ, and others which, though they be sincere, are but Weaklings and Babes in Christ.

'Tis according as men excel more or less in *Self-Resignation*, that they are denominated stronger or weaker Christians: this fully appears by what hath been already said.

Now who seeth not that there is exceeding much in *this* Consideration also to recommend this great Duty effectually to us, and to make us in love with it. For weak Christians, though  
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never so well-meaning, do bring nothing so much honour to Religion as the strong do ; nay, oftentimes they much discredit it. But none can doubt that it is exceedingly more for the honour of our Lord and his Religion to have his Servants strong, healthy and in good heart, than to have onely a company of sickly, crazy, impotent persons to attend him, such as are always complaining of difficulties, and to whom every Service that calls for any thing of Self-denial is grievous. 'Tis much more for his honour that his Church should be an Academy of persons strong and hardy, than that it should be a spiritual Hospital, a Spittal of distempered infirm things : That it should be an Orchard of well-grown, fair and goodly Trees bringing forth much fruit, rather than a Nursery of tender young Plants and little Shrubs. It is not for the honour of Christ the Physician of Souls, that his Patients should be always feeble, querulous, infirm, sore and faint, pale and meager, creeping by the walls, and at best but between sick and well ; but that they should grow up to an healthy Constitution, a good Complexion and sound temper conduceth greatly to his honour. *Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit,* John xv. 8.

And though it be true that *God will not despise the day of small things*, and that Christ is far from insulting over the weaknesses of young Christians, where there is at the bottom simplicity and plain-heartedness, the *good and honest heart* : Yet will he not encourage or indulge them neither in a lazy continuing in a state of weakness and Childhood ; but is displeased with those, that when for the time they might have been at strong meat, are yet but at milk ; that while they should be

be fighting the good fight of faith, and running with patience the race set before them, shall lye on the ground complaining, discouraged and disheartned.

And I add also, that according to the power or vigour of our Godliness, our strength and growth in Grace, we shall have more or less assurance of the goodness of our state, and higher or lower degrees of Glory in the life to come.

## C H A P. IX.

*That Self-Resignation is the Establishment of God's Kingdom in us here, and is an Introduction to his Kingdom of Glory hereafter.*

IX. **S**elf-Resignation is the Establishment of God's Kingdom within us here, and is an Introduction to his Kingdom of Glory hereafter.

1. *It is the Establishment of the Kingdom of God and Christ within us here.* No sooner hath a man obtained, by the grace of God, a power over his own Spirit, but this glorious Empire is set up in his Soul. When *Selfness* is mastered, and our will brought into compliance with the Divine Will, then is King *Jesus* crowned and enthroned within us.

*David* in his Troubles and in his Triumphs was a Figure and historical Type of Christ: He met with many troubles and difficulties before he was establishd in his Throne; and the Spiritual *David* meets with many also. His difficulties arise altogether from the opposition of our wills: They rage and set themselves against the

Lord and against his Anointed, as the *Moabites*, *Philistines*, *Amonites*, and house of *Saul* did against *David*. *We will not have Christ to reign over us* is the inward Language of the *Unresigned*. But no sooner is *Self-will* perswaded to yield, but the Kingdom of Christ is come into us. We may then cry *Hallelujah*, for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth.

A most joyful and high day is this, 'tis the day of Christ's inauguration. The State and Government of a *Resigned* Soul is (as *Josephus* observes of the *Jewish* Polity) a Theocracy.

2. *It is also a necessary preparation and introduction to the Kingdom of Glory*. Nay, it is the very Constitution and Essence of Happiness, and without *Self-Resignation* there can be no such thing.

The Happiness of glorified Souls doth not consist in their being above the Stars; for a Soul not resigned to the Will of God would be as far from Heaven, though mounted to such a heighth, as if it were in the lowest Abyss.

A good Angel while he converseth on Earth, and is fulfilling the pleasure of God here below, is most happy, and carrieth his Paradise and Heaven always with him: And if such an Angel might be supposed to repine and struggle with the Will of God, and so not to continue in *Resignation*, he would consequently not continue to be happy, though his residence were always in the Mansions above.

This is a most fundamental Maxim, and of great importance in Practical Religion, That Happiness, as to the main, is to be transformed into the Divine Image and likeness, to partake of the Divine Nature, to have one Will with God, to be free to Obedience: And that the unspeakable

able and glorious joy of blessed Souls ariseth chiefly from that harmonious agreement and consort which is between God and them.

Other notions of Heaven are unspiritual and carnal, and argue men not to have sufficiently tasted the powers of the world to come, but to favour too much the things of this earth; and, as St. *Austin* doth fitly express it, *Cum hoc mundo velle exire extra hunc mundum, to desire to carry this world along with them, when they leave it.*

And because it is absolutely impossible that man should be in an happy state while he is otherwise affected than God is, thence it is that the Infinite, Sovereign, and Perfect Goodness requires our Conformity to himself, and will have a participation of his Holiness and Image the condition of attaining a participation of his Happiness, nor will dispense with purity of heart in order to the seeing of him. For without this, without the agreeableness of our Wills to the Divine Will, we shall be wholly unqualified and unmeet for God's Kingdom, and incapable of the happiness thereof.

## CHAP. X.

*That Self-will is the Root of all Sin and Misery.*

X. *Self-will* on the contrary is the Root of all Sin and Misery. Every Lust and Sin grows out of this root of uncurbed desire and *Self-will*, which is a *root of bitterness, a root that beareth gall and wormwood.*

It may be fit here again to observe, That in that large enumeration of those sins and evil dispositions which makes times perillous, this is men-

2 Tim. iii.  
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tioned in the first place, *Men shall be lovers of their own selves*. This is mentioned first as being the root and ground of all the rest.

It was well observed by St. *Austin*, *Civitas Diaboli incipit ab amore sui*. The Devil's City is founded in *self-love* and *self-pleasing*. Where *Self-will* is set up, there the Soul is impetuously carried out to all iniquity with greediness, so far as it is judged safe, and that such or such a sin is not prejudicial to another more beloved sin, or to any worldly advantage or Interest.

The Soul wherein *Self-will* is set up, saith with proud *Pharaoh*, *Who is the Lord that I should obey him?* This is another abomination of desolation standing in the holy place, erected in the Soul which should be holy to the Lord. *Self-will*, it is an inward and mysterious Antichrist, *opposing and exalting it self above God, it sits as God* in the heart, that inward temple of God, *shewing it self that it is God*.

It is an *Anti-God*, and will be obeyed in all things. It sets up its *threshold by God's threshold, and its posts by God's posts*.

In the Scripture, the pleasing of our own will is frequently put in the general for all sin. In *Ecclesiastes* xi. 9. going on in sinful and wicked courses is exprest by *walking in the way of thine heart, and in the sight of thine eyes*. In *Jeremy* mens wickedness is often stiled, *walking after the imagination of their own heart*. And in *Isaiah* lviii. 13. doing of sinful actions is called *doing thine own ways, and finding thine own pleasure*. In *Numbers* xv. 39. sinning against God is called *seeking after thine own heart, and thine own eyes*.

And as *Self-will* is the Root of all Sin, so is it likewise the Root of *Misery* both here and hereafter. It

It being the root of the former, it must needs be so of the latter also; Sin and Misery being inseparable.

And as we shewed that the Happiness of Heaven, as to the main, consists in being transformed into the Divine Image, or the having but one Will with God; so by consequence the Hellish State doth chiefly consist in a perfect contrariety to God, and the Soul's opposition to the Divine Will. Therefore is the Devil a most miserable creature, because he is made up of Self-will, because the Will of God is most grievous to him, he sets himself against it, and goes about the world soliciting and endeavouring to draw others from complying with it: And those with whom he prevails, he by so doing makes them as miserable as himself.

If there were no *Self-will* there would be no Hell, according to that of St. Bernard, *Cesset voluntas propria, & infernus non erit*. Let *Self-will* cease, and there will be no Hell.

To suppose *Self-Resignation* in a damned and miserable Soul, and *Self-will* in an happy and glorified one, is to suppose the greatest contradictions and inconsistencies.

There can be nothing of *Self-Resignation* in Hell, and nothing of *Self-will* in Heaven.

In speaking to the fourth and fifth Considerations, it hath been shewed, that it is impossible that that soul should be miserable which is sincerely and intirely resigned to the Will of God; and on the contrary, that that Soul cannot but be miserable that wills contrary to him; and therefore I shall proceed no farther upon this Argument.

## C H A P. XI.

*That the Love of Christ in dying for Sinners makes the Duty of Self-Resignation most highly reasonable, and lays the greatest obligation upon us thereunto.*

XI. **I**N the eleventh place, The Love of Christ in dying for us is most powerful to oblige Christians to this great Duty of *Self-Resignation*. Christ's giving himself a Sacrifice and Offering to God in a way of *atonement* and *expiation*, layeth the strongest engagement on Christians to offer up themselves as a Sacrifice to him in a way of *Resignation* and *Obedience*.

This improvement the Apostle makes of this Consideration, 2 Cor. v. 14, 15. *The love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them.* What could be more express? --- *Should not live unto themselves, not please themselves, gratifie their own Self-will and Lusts; but please Christ, do his will, give him the preheminance in all things: Not seek our own, but the things which are Jesus Christ's: Not mind and pursue our own ease, profit and honour chiefly, and above all, but live to his honour and glory, and prefer his Interest before our own.*

The like inference the same Apostle makes in 1 Cor. vi. 20. *Ye are bought with a price, (viz. with the precious blood of Jesus Christ) therefore glorifie God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's: And what is the best way of glorifying God, hath been shewed in the third Chapter.* The

The *Death of Christ* is the great manifestation of *his Love*; by the bitterness of his Cup, by the depth of his Sorrows and Sufferings for us we may make an Estimate of the exceeding height of his dear affection. Behold and see, was there any Sorrow like unto his Sorrow? and therefore was there any Love like unto his Love? *Greater love hath no man than this, (saith Christ himself) that a man lay down his life for his friends, but he laid down his life for us when Enemies.*

Out of Love he left Heaven and the bosom of his Father, and the glorious attendance of the Angels, and humbled himself to a mean, low and afflicted life upon Earth. *He who was rich became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich: Such was the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ.* 2 Cor. 8.9.

Out of Love he died, he who was *Lord of all, the Lord of Glory, the brightness of God's Glory, and the express Image of his Person*, he humbled himself to death, even the death of the Cross, a death of the greatest pain and shame. And notwithstanding the pains and sorrows, both inward and outward, which he felt, were inexpressibly great; yet after his Resurrection, he would have gone into the Garden again, gone over his Agony again, and drunk that bitter Cup which made his Soul so sorrowful: He would have gone to *Calvary* and been crucified again; he would have poured out his life to death again and again, if it had so pleased God, had it been the will of his Father that he should repeat his Sorrows and Sufferings, for the Redemption of man; for he knew nothing but to be obedient and perfectly resigned to the Will of his Father.

This is that *Love of Christ which passeth knowledge,*

ledge, Love beyond compare, Love beyond expressions or conceptions; and can there be a more natural, a more powerful engagement to *Self-Resignation* than such a Love? Did Christ so freely give himself for thee, and shouldest not thou most heartily and willingly give up thy self to him? Was all of Christ turned into a Sacrifice for thee, and shouldest not thou make an entire Oblation of thy self, without any reserve to him?

It's not only *Ingenuity* but *Justice* wholly to live to him that died for thee, and bought thee with so dear a price. Did he suffer such unexpressible pains for us, and shall not we be willing to endure some pain and smart, which at first will be, in denying the solicitations of our fleshly mind; and in going about to cross our own will: And shall not we also patiently undergo any sorrows the Divine Wisdom sees it meet to exercise us with? the worst we can undergo in this world being far short of our Saviour's Sufferings in our behalf.

## CHAP. XII.

*That the high and holy Example of Christ layeth a mighty Obligation on Christians to Self-Resignation.*

XII. **I**N the last place, The high and holy Example of our Lord Jesus Christ obligeth us very strongly to the practice of this Duty of *Self-Resignation*. There never appeared in the world so perfect and lovely a Pattern and Idea of the best life, as was the life of Christ. There never shined in the world such a Light, nor was he  
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in any thing more a bright and shining Example to us than in *Self-Resignation*. A famous instance whereof we have (not to name other places) in that one speech of his, in his Agony in the Garden, recorded in *Matthew* xxvi. 39. and *Luke* xxii. 42. viz. *Father if thou be willing, let this Cup pass from me, nevertheless not my will but thine be done*. How bitter this Cup was, how great beyond compare the last Sufferings of Christ were, which began in the Garden of *Gethsemane*, and ended in his death on Mount *Calvary*, may appear,

First, *By those significant words that occur in the story of his Suffering and Agony*, Mat. xxvi. 37. *Then he began, not only λυπεσθαι to be very sorrowful, but ἀσχημονῶν to be very heavy, and ἐκθαμβησθαι (Mark xiv. 34.) to be sore amazed, and that even to an Agony*. And both in *Matthew* and *Mark* is that Expression, *περίλυτος ἡ ψυχὴ μου, &c.* *My soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death*.

Secondly, *By the great weakness of his Body*: In his Agony he sweat as it were drops of blood, an extraordinary, unnatural sweat, in falling from him in thick, viscous, clammy drops, and this in a cold Season too. And so weak was his body Jo. 18. 18. at this time, that an Angel comes down from Heaven to strengthen him, *Luke* xxii. 43. This was a visible manifestation of excessive heaviness and a great colluctation within him, his mind so strangely affecting his body.

Thirdly, *By his prayers and tears*. He prayed thrice to this purpose, *Father if thou wilt be willing, let this Cup pass from me*: And the third time he prayed *ἐκτενέστερον* with more earnestness and vehemence. And when he prayed, he kneeled down, saith St. *Luke*; he fell on his face, saith St. *Matthew*; he fell on the ground, saith St. *Mark*: He lay

lay prostrate on the ground, and put himself into the posture of lowest humiliation. And besides, *his prayers and supplications were offered up with strong cryings and tears*, as saith the Author to the *Hebrews*, chap. v. 7.

By all this (and more might be added) it appears that this Cup was an exceedingly bitter Cup, and his Sufferings and Sorrows were beyond compare. And yet he was willing to undergo them; though there was that in his humane, natural will; which had a great antipathy against this Cup: yet it was not overcome and carried away thereby; but the Divine Principle in him did bring this will into a due acquiescence, and by the power thereof he freely resigned it up to the will of his Father. He was most willing to undergo these direful sufferings, notwithstanding they were inflicted without any the least demerit of his own, he being perfectly innocent and without sin.

Now the consideration of his holy Example lays a great obligation upon us to follow him, as in every other grace, so particularly in his *Resignation*: For the Gospel represents him not

\* Rom. 3. onely as \* *ἱλαστήριον*, a propitiatory Sacrifice, but

\* 1 Pet. 2. also as \* *ὑποβάμνον*, a pattern and example. The Gospel doth not onely represent the *Doctrine* of Christ to be *believed*, but the *Life* of Christ to be *followed*: Nor shall any have him for their Advocate and Propitiation, but such as are willing to have him for their Patern and Example, to copy out and imitate his Humility, Patience, Purity, Benignity and *Self-Resignation*. None shall be benefited by his Death, that are unwilling to live his Life.

So far was it from being the intention of our Saviour's Death, to make void or lessen the necessity of our being conformed to his Life, that one of the great ends of his coming into the World, and clothing himself with humane nature, was that he might give us an example of living, and be a pattern for our imitation: As we may learn from 1 *Pet.* ii. 21, 22, 23. *Mat.* xi. 29. *John* xiii. 15, &c.

That God might the more plainly and familiarly teach us how to be like himself, he was pleased to manifest himself in flesh, pitch his Tabernacle among us, go in and out before us in our likeness, and thus visibly exhibit himself, and become the most excellent pattern of Purity and Holiness, that *as he was, so we might be in this world.*

And I heartily wish that Christians did more seriously consider what a transcendent privilege and advantage it is that they have the Spirit and Life of Christ set before them in the New Testament, to shew what a Spirit they should be of, and what a life they should live. This is such a favour as the people of God had not vouchsafed to them in the Old Testament. There were several manifestations of God to the Jews, but they were all far short of this manifestation of his in the flesh; there was nothing in those for imitation, and for the forming of their lives into a conformity to his. And therefore if our lives be not better than theirs, we do not live as becomes Christians, nor are we faithful to this and other advantages we have above them.

But I fear we are too insensible of this privilege, and that we do not think sufficiently of this, that he who was in *the form of God, took upon*

*upon him the form of a servant*, clothed himself with humanity, put himself into the lowest and hardest circumstances, was tempted in all points as we, that so we might have a compleat Pattern and Guide in those many varieties of Conditions, difficulties and temptations we may meet withal, and be more particularly instructed how to behave our selves therein worthy of Christ.

This I know and have observed (and I doubt not but others can testifie the same) That those Christians who are most sensible of this extraordinary priviledge; that have high and dear thoughts of ~~the~~ Life of Christ, which is the Life of God manifested in our flesh, that have it most in their eye, and are most affected and enamoured with it, are most visibly bettered, and differ eminently from others, that there is a more excellent spirit in them, that they are more pure, meek and lowly, more benign and merciful, more resigned, and every way more exemplary, more of God is in them of a truth, they are greater Ornaments to the holy Religion which they profess, and more qualified with such a disposition as renders them more universally useful to mankind than other Christians.

And thus we have seen what a many most powerful Considerations there are, that demonstrate the exceeding reasonableness of this Duty of *Self-Resignation*, and strongly oblige and excite us to the Practice of it. Concerning which there shall yet more be immediately said in the next Section.

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## S E C T. II.

### *Directions for the attaining this most excellent Temper of SELF-RE- SIGNATION.*

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#### C H A P. I.

*That in order to the resigning our Wills intirely to the Will of God, we should frequently consider such principles as are most available to the effectual subduing them thereunto: And several such Principles further enlarged on.*

**A**ND now hoping that what hath been discoursed may have perswaded the Readers to some desires after the attainment of this excellent temper of *Self-Resignation*, we proceed to direct to the use of certain means and helps thereto: Some of which refer more particularly to Active, some to Passive *Resignation*, and others to both alike.

First, Let us often consider and labour to be fully possess'd with the truth and power of such Principles as are available, and have a proper tendency to the effectual subduing our Wills to the Will of God. This sort of Principles hath been largely spoken to; but because we cannot insist over-much upon so highly useful an Argument, nor indeed well speak sufficiently to it, we will dwell a while longer upon it, and entreat the  
Reader

Reader to fix deeply in his mind *these* following Truths also, which, though they are the same for substance with some of the foregoing, deserve to be farther and more particularly enlarged on.

1. *That the Will we are to submit to is the Will of our great Creator, Preserver and Benefactor.* It is the Will of our *Creator*, of him who hath given us our Being, and by whom we are whatsoever we are. Now we have shewn that man's receiving his Being from God, and his dependance upon him for the continuance of it, doth speak it necessarily his duty to be ruled, ordered and disposed by him, so that he can never be dis-obliged from willing agreeably to the Will of God.

As God is our *Creator*, he hath a right to be our absolute Lord and Sovereign; and he being so, we must needs acknowledge that we ought to will nothing nor do any thing but what God allows. That we are not to take leave to do what we list, but what God likes best.

Again, 'tis the Will of our great Preserver and Benefactor, who hath ever since we had a Being laid new Obligations upon us, in the continued care of his gracious Providence, and by his renewed mercies and favours. We are nothing without God, we have nothing but from him; and therefore we should do and will nothing, but what he would have us. He, the overflowing Spring of Goodness hath not left himself without witness, is always doing us good, and filling our hearts with food and gladness; doing all that is fit for him to do to please us, being not at all niggardly in the comforts of this life, but bestowing them in such a proportion as is able

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to content moderate and modest desires, and being richly gracious in affording us advantages and suitable means for a better life. And therefore if we have any the least sense of what is worthy and ingenuous, we will acknowledge it most reasonable and becoming we should do all we can to please him, who hath done so infinitely much to please us. The Apostle well knew the power of this Argument, when he said, *I beseech you by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service*, Rom. xii. 1.

Nor can there be a more powerful Argument than this to perswade to *Patience*, to a quiet and meek submission to all the disposals of the Divine Providence; seeing for one cross we have many hundred blessings. *Ubi mali gutta est, ibi immensum mare beneficiorum Dei.* Where there is one drop of evil, there is a large sea of divine favours and benefits. And this men would be forced to confess, if they were as curious and careful to consider the many mercies they enjoy, as they are to consider the few evil things that they suffer: If they were duly sensible that they are less than the least of the many mercies they possess; but in all their sufferings God punisheth them less than their sins deserve. Holy *Job* thought it reasonable thus to argue, as prodigious and unparallel'd as his sufferings were, *Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?* Job ii. 10. What? is God bound to be always heaping favours upon us? must we have nothing but Sun-shine, fair and calm days, must we be fed with nothing but marrow and fatness, taste nothing but what is sweet and dainty? If God gives us sometimes to taste of the sour and bit-

ter, to drink of the waters of *Marah*, shall we repine and murmur, and think much of it? Far be it from us so to do.

2. *The Will we are to obey and submit to is the Will of the infinitely perfect Being, that is most holy, most good, most wise, most powerful:* And accordingly his Will is most holy, good, wise and perfect, and therefore infinitely more worthy to be followed than our own Will, which is vain, foolish and perverse, when not governed by his, and hath many foolish and hurtful desires.

If a Child be left to his own Will, it would be his ruine, and it would be much more pernicious to *us* not to be guided, governed and restrained by the Will of God.

And when God doth restrain and abridge us as to some things which our Will would be free and loose to, we have no cause to complain; as those that are come to be grown men, and to have a right judgment of things, do clearly see that they had no cause to be froward and complain when Children, that their careful and wise Parents would not suffer them to eat green trash, nor humour them in every thing they longed for.

God, who is the great Physician of Souls, seeth it fit in his infinite Wisdom to restrain us from certain things, as a wise and careful Physician doth his Patient from what he knoweth would be his bane, however grateful to his appetite.

And so for the other part of *Resignation*, Submission to God's disposals, and Patience under afflictions, when it is the will of God we should be exercised with them, it is to be yielded to and preferred above our own will, as being the Will of a most wise and good God, the great Physician

Physician of Souls, who perfectly knows our frame, and what affliction is necessary Physick for us.

God is not onely to be considered as the great King and Sovereign of the World, and therefore his Will to be received with all regard, but he is also to be considered as the wise Physician of the World, that hath care of Mankind as of sick persons, this World being a great Hospital or Pest-house, a place for diseased and infected Souls, and afflictions are his Physick which he prescribes and applies according to the several cases of his Patients. The sick Soul is not for this kind of Physick, but would rather be pleased and gratified; but God's thoughts are not as our thoughts, nor his will as ours. He will have his Patients to submit to his method and way of Cure, and not quarrel at his appointments; herein he is wise and good also, 'tis an act of great mercy in him to do thus. It would be an act of cruelty in the Physician to comply with his Patients humour, and to suffer his will to prevail and rule. And there is no true Christian, however *chastening is not joyous but grievous* to him for a time, but he finds afterwards that *it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness*, and that *it was good for him to have been afflicted*.

I added that it is the Will of God most *Powerful* as well as most *holy* and *wise*, that we are to submit to; and this teaches us how vain and fruitless an attempt it is to struggle with and resist his Will. *Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker; let the possheard strive with the possheards of the earth*, Isaiah xlv. 9. So that if we will not be perswaded to a compliance with the Will of God either from the consideration of his Holiness,

Wisdom or Goodness, let us dread the terrible effects of his Power. How many instances of Irresignation and stubborn Self-willedness are to be found in Scripture, whom God made to know, before he had done with them, that 'tis impossible to oppose his Will and prosper.

3. *The Will we are to be resigned to commands such things for the most part as are in their own nature good, and carry their own reason in them; and whatsoever things else are commanded, they are in order to such things.* The goodness and reasonableness of all God's primary Commands, and our Obligation to them, doth not meerly depend upon his Sovereign Authority: Though they are to be observed because God commands them, yet he doth not command them only *pro imperio*, to shew his absolute Sovereignty and Dominion over us, but because they are intrinsically and essentially good, most agreeable to his holy nature, and greatly for our good and advantage, infinitely better for us as we are Reasonable Creatures to observe, than to be disobliged from.

*This is the will of God even our sanctification,* 1 Thef. iv. 3. This is the sum of all he wills concerning us; and judge in your selves, is not a life of Chastity better than that of *Uncleanness*? Is not *Temperance* and *Sobriety* better than *Surfeiting* and *Drunkenness*? Is not *Humility* and *Meekness* more lovely and commendable than *Pride* and *Insolence*? Is not *Justice*, *Uprightness* and *Truth* better than *Injustice*, *Falshood* and *Oppression*? Is not *Charity* and *Pity* better than *Hatred*, *Cruelty*, and *Hard-heartedness*? Is it not more worthy and reasonable to love God above all, than to prefer any thing before him, he being the highest Good, our infinitely best Friend and

and Father, from whom our selves and all we enjoy are? Nay, whose reason doth not tell him, that as the former are most amiable and most becoming humane nature, so the latter are as hateful and unworthy of us?

Is it not better beyond all comparison to love the Soul which is Spiritual and Immortal, more than the Body which is corruptible and but for a short time, and whose welfare depends wholly upon the Well-being of the Soul? And when we have sinned against the Law written in our hearts, or more clearly and largely revealed in the Scriptures, is it not reasonable and most becoming us to repent, to be sensible of our unkind and unworthy behaviour towards God, to be grieved that we have offended the Father of mercies, and amend our ways, and do so no more, as ever we would expect his favour, and the light of his well-pleased Countenance, and those mercies which we most need, and which none but he can bestow upon us? And is not this better than to continue in disobedience, impenitence, and to harden our necks against God, and not to be affected with any ingenuous sense of our carriage towards him? So that we see Repentance is most agreeable to the quality and condition of our state here; and so is also patient Submission to the Will of God in his disposals of us, both in respect of his Wise Goodness and Sovereign Power, nor can any thing more become us. And nothing is more manifestly unreasonable than to fret and repine at any of the Divine Providences.

And as for the other things God commands, those which are our duty only by positive institution; as they are but very few under the Gospel, so are they only commanded for this end,

that they may better secure the weightier matters of the Law, the primary commands, and to fit us for a mindful regard and observance of them. And he, who is infinitely wise and good, knowing best what is fittest to be required of us in order to so great an end, it cannot but be highly unreasonable and unworthy not to comply cheerfully with his Will declared in *these* also as well as in the *other* Commands.

4. *The Resignation of our Wills to the Will of God hath the promise of a Reward infinitely above the labour of any services he requires of us, and the pain of any sufferings he inflicts upon us.* Our services are due to God as we are his Creatures, and therefore it would be our duty to yield our selves to his Will without the consideration of any future Reward. And besides we have more than our services are worth, and our labours and sufferings amount unto. We are less than the least of the multitude of mercies we daily receive. And the very comforts and pleasures which arise from the sense of doing our duty, and from the being busied in that work and employment which is most agreeable to the primitive and proper constitution of our Souls, are a great Reward. But that God should confer a Reward upon us upon the account of poor mean services, than which nothing can be better; a Reward so rich and glorious beyond expression and apprehension, what a consideration is this! What we do or suffer in compliance with the Will of God, is far from being above what the heart can conceive, or the tongue express: But the Reward which God will bestow for this doing and suffering is such as is *unspeakable and full of Glory, and passeth all understanding.* It is such as eye hath not seen,

nor

nor ear heard, nor have entred into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him, 1 Cor. ii. 9.

Again, our Services and Sufferings are but for a short time, they are but for this life, which is but as a vapour that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away: But God will reward them with an eternal Reward, with an exceeding and eternal weight of Glory. So that well might the Apostle reckon the sufferings of this present time (and consequently the services also) not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us, Rom. viii. 18. Thou art not far from thy journeys end, thou hast but a short life, a little time to testify thy love to God here on earth, and he hath an Eternity to reward thee in; which therefore should encourage our patience to persevere and hold out to the end. Especially when we consider, that though this Reward be future, yet it is near, at least, part of it, and a considerable part too. Though there will be a further completion of our felicities at the Resurrection of the just, and the great day of recompence, yet the Souls of the faithful may expect to receive a very considerable part of the recompence of reward before that day.

Jam. iv. 14.

2 Cor. iv. 17.

And even in *this* life they have some earnest of that glorious Reward, some foretaste of the pleasures of God's right hand, some bunches of the Grapes that grow in the upper and heavenly Canaan. And the more Christians endeavour to live the life of Heaven, the more heavenly their affections and conversations are here, the more shall they have here of heavenly Enjoyments. And in these respects the Scripture sometimes speaks of those that are excellently religious,

even whilst they are in this life, *that they have eternal life*, Joh. vi. 54. 1 Joh. v. 13. And *that they sit with Christ in heavenly places*, Eph. ii. 6.

Lastly, *This Resignation to the Will of God is also highly conducing to our Temporal Good*: And that not only because it hath the promise of the life that now is, as well as of that to come, but because it tends in its own nature hercunto. Here I will particularly and very briefly shew that it makes for our profit and advantage, as to our *outward estate*, as to our *ease and quiet*, and as to our *health and strength*.

1. *As to our outward estate*. This it doth,  
 1. As it engages men against Pride, and to Humility and Modesty. By this means are avoided vast and needless expences about Attire and Dressing, Building, Feastings, and a great number of pompous Vanities: And also the great charges which men of aspiring and ambitious spirits are at for the procuring of Dignities, Honours and High Places; and the supporting of their Grandeur that they may be the more esteemed, revered, and admired by the world.  
 2. As it engageth to Temperance and Sobriety, against all Sensuality, and a delicious luxurious life. And so, expensive Divertisements, Sports and Revellings, Incontinence, and making provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof, which impair and consume mens Estates, and bring not a few to a morsel of bread, are all avoided. The desires of Temperance are cheap, easie and soon satisfied.  
 3. As it engages to Meekness in opposition to Wrath, Malice and Revenge: And by this means, Quarrels, which often cost men dear, and abundance of expensive Law-suits are prevented. It costs men much more usually

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to revenge Injuries than to bear them. 4. As it engageth to Labour and Industry in lawful Callings in opposition to Carelessness and Sloth, *which (as Solomon saith) shall clothe a man with rags, whereas the hand of the diligent maketh rich.*

Prov. x. 4

2. *It makes for our ease and quiet in the world.* And this, 1. As it engageth to Meekness and peaceable spiritedness, which as it is a grace most lovely in it self, so it makes those that are indued with it lovely and acceptable to others, and wins and attracts good will. 2. As it engageth to Mercifulness both in giving and forgiving. None but a Monster, and one prodigiously wicked and unworthy, will put affronts upon and procure trouble to those that are merciful in these two respects. 3. As it engageth to Justice, Truth and Uprightness, in giving to every one his due, in not defrauding, wronging or defaming any; all which plainly tend to the procuring of Peace.

3. *It makes for our health and strength, the good habit and constitution of our Bodies, as well as of our Souls.* This it doth, 1. As it engageth to Sobriety against Excess, which both begets and feeds diseases and Distempers. Incontinence and Intemperance weaken both the body and the mind, shorten life, and make it painful and uncomfortable while it lasts. 2. As it engageth against heart-tearing Cares, and such anxious Solitudes as waste natural strength, and prey upon the spirits. 3. As it engages against all inordinate affections, all *fleshly* as well as worldly lusts. These make men lean and sick, as *Amnon's* lust after *Tamar* made him. 4. As it begets chearfulness and tranquillity of spirit, which hath a proper efficacy to the preservation of health.

health. As a broken spirit drieth the bones, so a cheerful heart doth good like a medicine, Prov. xvii. 22. 5. As it engageth to honest labour in opposition to a soft and delicate life. Exercise hath a natural tendency to the making men hardy, strong and healthful.

Now then, would we be fully, and in all things resigned to the holy and good will of God, let us observe this first Direction, and labour after a great sense of the truth of the foregoing Principles, and all those Considerations which have been proposed to our view, which are most powerful arguments to perswade to this Duty.

## CHAP. II.

*That humble and fervent prayer is a necessary and effectual means to the attaining the grace of Self-Resignation.*

**I**N the second place, Being humbled in a deep sense of thy *Irresignation* and Disobedience, (wherein thou hast hitherto walked to the hurt and danger of thy Soul) beg of God this high and holy temper of Soul. This one thing desire thou of God, and seek after it all thy days.

Humble and holy Prayer is one of the greatest helps to the obtaining of any grace or good thing from God. Let us then carefully apply our selves to him for this great blessing; it being such a one as none but himself can give; and he who is our *Father in Heaven, the Father of mercies*, will give this, and all good things to them that ask him.

*If*

If any of you lack wisdom (saith S. James) let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not: and it shall be given him. Now this Resignation of our Wills to the Will of God is the highest point of wisdom; and this sort of wisdom is particularly meant in the Text, as appears by the foregoing Verses. chap. i. 5.

But then our Prayers must be with fervency and in faith.

First, *They must be fervent.* The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much: James v. 16. Not cold and languid desires, or faint wishes.

But we are not to judge of the true fervency of Prayer by the heat of the head or phancy, but by the heat of the heart, and the ardency of our affections. *My heart* (saith David) שִׁיר *boils or bubbles forth a good matter.* We are to judge thereof by the passionateness and earnestness of our desires, not by any thing that is obvious to sense, not by the loudness or length of Prayer, (be it without or with a form of words) though it were as long as that prayer of Baal's Priests, from morning to noon, or as that prayer among the Papists of forty hours, by which they amuse the weak and injudicious in spiritual things.

There may be as much, yea more, of the Spirit of Prayer, when there are no words at all. There are times when the Spirit maketh intercession with groanings that cannot be uttered, affections too quick and strong for expressions, and which would cool, if put into words. Thus Hannah spake in her heart to God, her voice was not heard, but she poured out her Soul before the Lord; and God heard, who knoweth the secrets of the heart, and the mind of the Spirit. These inward

ward breathings of the Soul are ever very precious to God, and find favour with him.

When a Soul prayeth out of a deep sense and feeling of its wants, and is full of affectionate breathings after God, and hath the most ardent and inflamed desires after Spiritual things, this is true praying with fervency, and in the Holy Ghost. And the silence of the Soul is louder, and much sooner reacheth the ears of the Almighty, than the greatest loudness and volubility of speech.

If we would therefore obtain this best and most divine of all blessings, let us pray for it with the greatest ardour of affection: we may be assured that God will never cast away so rich a Pearl as this, upon those that declare themselves insensible of its worth, by asking it in a cold and formal manner.

And the more to excite and quicken our desires after it, let us know, that if God accepts our prayers, and gives us this holy temper of Spirit, he doth infinitely more for us than what *Herod* promised the daughter of *Herodias*. If he gives thee this Empire over thine own Will, he bestows that on thee which incomparably excels the greatest earthly Kingdom. The Kingdom of God (as hath been said) is then within us here, and we are thereby made meet for his Kingdom of Glory hereafter. And who that duly considers this, can be flat and heavy in his prayers for this Grace?

Secondly, *Our Prayers must be also in Faith*. Thus *S. James* tells us we must ask this Spiritual Wisdom, in the following verse: *But let him ask in faith, nothing wavering-----* That is, we must believe that as God is able, so he is as willing and ready to give us what we ask, *if we ask according*

to his will, as S. John qualifies it; 1 Ep. v. 14. And it is according to his Will, and pleaseth him highly that we ask Spiritual Wisdom.

This Faith is the ground of all address to God, Heb. xi. 6. *He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.* And this he will assuredly be in his own time, which is always the best. God may sometimes make as if he did not hear, that we may seek him more diligently and pray more fervently, that he may prove our patience and just valuation of his blessings, and that we may be the more thankful for them when we have them, prize them the more, and improve them the better; but if we persevere in earnest and believing praying, we shall undoubtedly in due time obtain. And as for such spiritual good things as are necessary to Salvation, we are to pray for them with such a faith, as to assure our selves that God will give them, if we ask aright; his most gracious nature and promises assuring us that he cannot deny them to such askers.

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C H A P. III.

*That in order to our being entirely resigned to the Divine Will, we must be willing pati Deum, to suffer God, and abide the power of his Spirit working in us.*

III. **T**Hirdly, Having poured out thy Soul before God in humble and earnest Prayer, thou must be willing *paci Deum*, to suffer God, and abide the power of his Spirit working in thee.

To this purpose there is an observable passage  
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in St. *Austin* on Psalm cii. 3. *Magni languores, sed major medicus, &c.* Be the maladies of thy Soul never so great, yet there is a Physician that is greater, and who never fails to cure; for to an all-powerful Physician nothing is incurable, only thou must patiently suffer thy self to be cured. Do not thrust back his hand when he begins to touch thy sores, and search thy Souls wounds: He well knows what he is a doing, do not hinder and resist when it begins to pain, be not so delicate and tender to thine own hurt, but with a quiet patience bear for a while the anguish when he cuts and lanceth, considering that the present pain makes way for thy future health and soundness.

Let not Christ and his holy Spirit have cause to say of thee, (as it was said of *Babylon*) *we would have healed him, but he would not be healed.*

*Ut corpus redimas ferrum patieris & ignes.*

For the health and safety of the body (in case of a Gangreen or other dangerous disease) how do men endure a tedious course of Physick and much torment?

*Ut valeas animo quicquam tolerare negabis?*

And for the health of thy Soul, infinitely more considerable than a little longer life and ease of the body, (which is all that Physick or Chirurgery can at any time effect, but can never secure) wilt thou not endure the pain of being cured of its diseases, which let alone will make thee eternally miserable?

Let us be therefore entreated, as ever we would obtain this Divine temper of *Self-Resignation*, to take heed of *quenching the Spirit*, of *resisting the holy Ghost*, as the Jews did, and paid dear for

for it. Take we heed of stifling any of his Convictions, and rejecting his Motions: Let us not seek to shift off and put by serious and awakening thoughts working in us, as the usual practice of sinners is, by diverting to the vain entertainments and false pleasures of the World and the flesh, nor endeavour to drown the voice of Conscience, which is the voice of God, and to be heard with a reverend regard.

If we would have Christ sit as a Purifier and refiner in the midst of us, to purge us as gold and silver, that we may offer our selves unto the Lord an offering in righteousness, we must abide the day of his coming.

But alas! I must needs observe by the way, there are but few of the Christian Profession who are thus patient, and will endure the refining and purifying work of the Spirit. Most would with *Simon Magus* have the Holy Ghost in his Gifts, such as may make them seem some great ones, and procure admiration to them, but few would have the *renewing of the Holy Ghost*, and the *Sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience*. Many would be glad to have the Spirit to sit as a Refiner upon their Lips, that they may be able to speak spiritually, but few are willing that he should sit as a Refiner in their Hearts to melt and consume their Self-will, and purge out of them all secret inclinations to Sin. Abundance have learnt Parrot-like, to talk of the Spirit, and pretend greatly to things Spiritual, which yet declare by their lives as those in *St. Jude*, that they are altogether *Sensual*, *having not the Spirit*, that they have received no other Spirit but that of the world.

It hath been a great and common fault, which  
hath

hath been the occasion of a world of mischief to Souls, that men have been valued as Spiritual by the *gifts* of the Spirit, (such as the veriest hypocrites may have) rather than by the *Graces* and fruits of the Spirit, such as those *Gal. v. 21, 22.*

But to return to our present Direction: Would we have our Wills fully resigned to the Will of God, let us above all things beware of *grieving his holy Spirit*, according to the Apostles Caution, *Eph. iv. 30.* Let us take heed of rejecting him, when he offers to work this work in us, and of giving him any the least check or discouragement, but permit him to have his full scope and liberty of doing what he pleases within us without disturbance. When Christ *stands at the door and knocks*, and waits to be gracious to us, let us not refuse to open to him, nor seem not to hear him; but say with *Samuel, Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth.*

#### C H A P. IV.

*That we are not only to suffer the Spirit to work in us, but ought also to work with him in heartily opposing our Self-desires; and what endeavours we should use is shewed in five Particulars.*

IV. **F**ourthly, We must not be merely passive, and only suffer the Holy Spirit to do his work in us, but we must likewise work with him in vigorously resisting and crossing our Self-desires. We must put on heroical resolutions stoutly to oppose the impetuous desires of our sensitive powers. *It is God that worketh in us both to will and to do,* but yet we must also *work out our*

own salvation with fear and trembling. We must strive according to his working which worketh in us mightily. We must be faithful to that lesser light and strength which is in us, and we shall have more light and strength. If we be faithful in fewer Talents, we shall receive more. And here take these following Directions.

1. *Deny the first Sollicitations, and resist the first motions of inordinate appetites, depress them at their first rising.* Quench ἀναδυστασάντων ὀρεξίν Lust when it doth begin to smoke, (as Justin Martyr phraseth it) before it bursteth out into a flame; for then it will be unruly and too hard to master. Think not to ease thy self by giving some satisfaction to thy lusts; for by this means they will sollicit and vex thee the more; and the yielding to commit a sin leaves a greater propension and desire to sin again. Thou shalt best silence the clamours and importunities of a temptation, by not listening in the least to them. As one act of mortification prepares for and enables to another; so on the contrary, by once yielding to corrupt nature, thou art made less able to resist another time.

*Facilius est entia affectuum prohibere, quam impetum regere. Seneca epist. 86.*

2. *As to those sins which either through Constitution or custom thou hast the strongest inclination to, thou must shew a more than ordinary roughness and severity against them.* It is not safe so much as to dispute or argue with temptations to such sins. It was a good observation of Aristotle, that some passions are not to be vanquished λογῷ, ἀλλὰ βίᾳ, by reason, but by force; that is, not so much by the one as by the other. Not so much by arguments as by a holy violence and resolution.

And there is not more need of taking this course against any temptations, than those that

solicite to the Sin of Uncleanness. *Duriora sunt praelia castitatis*, saith S. Cyprian: *The battles of Chastity are more sharp than any other.*

τὸ ἡδὲ α  
ἰσὶ CIAIA.  
Arist. Eth.

The forementioned Philosopher in his *Ethicks* observing that *man is ζῷον ἑνθιπράτον ὑπὸ τῶν ἡδονῶν*, a creature very apt to be taken and ensnared by pleasures, adviseth, that for the attaining of vertue (the middle between two extreams) we should shun that extreame most, and keep farthest from it, which pretends to most pleasure\*. This is good advice, and there cannot be better given for the attaining the vertue of Chastity, and the overcoming temptations to Uncleanness, which of all other sins doth promise the most pleasure, than not to trust our selves to enter into the least parley with them, but presently to fly from them, by diverting our selves to other thoughts, and forcing our minds to other objects.

\* Ἐν πλν-  
πὶ μάλιστα  
φυλακίῳν  
τὸ ἡδὲ α  
τὸ ἡδονῶν.

3. *We ought, as much as lieth in us, to shun whatsoever may probably be an occasion of our being tempted, especially to such sins as we are most inclined to.* Art thou prone to excess either in meat or drink? Art thou apt suddenly to take fire, and to be inflamed with passion? Art thou of a lustful temper, or the like? Avoid all thou canst such places, company, and objects as may be incentives to those appetites. Thus in order to the avoiding of the Sin of Uncleanness, the Wiseman adviseth, *not to come near the house of the whorish woman*: and for the prevention of the Sin of Drunkenness, not so much as to look on the wine when 'tis red, and giveth its colour in the glass.

4. *It is of good use for the better securing our perseverance in the spiritual warfare, with humble dependance on God for the aids of his grace, to engage our selves in solemn vows against those sins especially*  
which

*which have gotten most power and dominion over us.* I cannot commend the obliging our selves by vows to certain tasks (as the manner of some is) which have not an immediate and special tendency to the mortifying of Sin, and advancement of Holiness. Such vows are found by experience to be both unprofitable and burdensome, to be insinuating and hampering, and rather to gratifie Superstition, and minister questions and scrupulosity, than godly edifying. But to vow against things unquestionably evil, and to the use of certain means that are necessary to the destroying the body of Sin, and that first, for a shorter space of time, and afterwards for a longer; and so, that time being expired, to renew these vows as long as we shall see it needful, and till we be well grounded and established in Holiness, till Religion become our nature, the temper and constitution of our Souls, the joy of our hearts, and our deliberate choice and settled practice, till we have gotten the compleat mastery over those lusts which we have been most carried away captive by; I say, to vow with such cautions is found by experience to be of exceeding great benefit and advantage.

And when we have thus vowed, we should frequently reflect upon what we have done; and then especially, when we are solicited by the Tempter within or without to sin. Let us then say with holy *David*, *Thy vows are upon me, O God: I have sworn, and I will perform it, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.* Neither hopes nor fears, neither the terrours nor allurements of the world shall dissuade me from a faithful obedience to them.

Psal. lvi

12.

Psal. cix.

106.

Vows prudently managed are of great use to  
F 2
secure

*Powers ni-  
hil aliud  
est, quam  
animum  
immobili-  
tate ne pos-  
sit retro-  
gredi.*

secure us to Religion; and this is the only end of them. *To vow (saith Cajetan) is nothing else, but to fix the mind and make it immoveable, that it may not start back from the practice of Religion.*

And as for those that are shy or slack thus to engage and devote themselves to God, (which I fear in most proceeds from a too dear affection to some sin or sins) let them know that God's Vows are already upon them, they are under the Obligation of the Baptismal Vow, *to renounce the Devil and all his works, the vain pomp and glory of the world, the covetous desires of the same, and the carnal desires of the flesh, so as not to follow nor be led by them.* So much is implied in being baptized in, or into, the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost. And besides, those that have received the Lord's Supper, have thereby virtually renewed their Vow in Baptism. In this other Sacrament we make a Profession, *that we offer and present unto God our selves, our Souls and Bodies, to be a Holy and Lively Sacrifice to him:* Than which there is nothing more due or reasonable, considering the great Love of God in giving his Son for us, the great Love of our Saviour Christ in his Death and Sufferings represented in this Sacrament, and the great Blessings procured for us by the Bloud of that spotless Lamb. So that all of us, young or old, have already bound our Souls with a Bond, (as to vow is described *Numb. xxx.*) being under the engagement of either one or both these Sacramental Vows; and therefore in exhorting you to oblige your selves by solemn Vows to the duties of Religion, I do not advise you to a new thing, but only to repeat what you have already done; and if you intend to stand to the Vows you have made, what should deter you from

from reiterating them whilst you have need of them.

But always remember when you vow to the Lord, to do it with a trust and faith in his power and all-sufficient Grace, and with a distrust of your own natural ability to perform your Vows: And when at any time you have failed in the performance of them, be deeply humbled before God, and renew your Engagements with a greater sense of your weakness and falseness of heart, and be more watchful over your selves, and let your falls make you more narrowly look to your feet for the time to come.

5. *Fasting is another means to be used for the mortification of the body of Sin.* It is of great consequence, and necessary to the health of the inward man, to keep under the body, to humble, chastise, and bring it into due subjection. This was the practice of St. Paul himself, who had not such unruly passions and appetites to tame as we have.

Religious Fasting is of great use to the subduing of the Body to the Spirit, and to the starving of corruptions by cutting off their provision, as the ungovernable beast is made tame by taking away his provinder. And there are a sort of Devils that will not go out without Fasting added to Prayer, and other means; but 'tis most especially of force for the casting out the *Unclean Devil*: And according as we find we stand in more or less need of this remedy, we should oftner or seldomer make use of it.

## C H A P. V.

*Of the great power and efficacy of Faith in God;  
Faith in his Power and Goodness.*

V. **F**ifthly, The next Direction I shall give in order to subduing our Wills to the Will of God, is that of our Saviour, *Have Faith in God*, Mark xi. 22. Have faith in his *Power* and *Goodness*; this will add life to our prayers, this will animate and strengthen all our endeavours.

Take heed of doubting whether the Lord's hand be not shortned, that it cannot save; whether his ear be not heavy, that it cannot hear; or his bowels shut up, that he is not ready to help.

Take heed of questioning, whether thine own Will and selfish desires be not stronger than can be subdued, of entertaining suspicious thoughts, that after all thy endeavours to win the Spiritual *Canaan*, there will be no arriving at that Land of Rest, but that at last thou shalt die in the Wilderness; that there is none or but little hope of overcoming *γίγαντες ὅμοιοι*, the *Giant-like mind*, (as the expression is in *Ecclesiasticus* xxiii. 4.) and those sons of *Anak* that thou findest vigorous and strong in thee. For by this thine unbelief or weakness of faith thou greatly dishonourest either the Power or Goodness of God, who is able, and as willing as able to save the Soul that trusteth in him. And by this means will the Chariot-wheels of thy Soul be taken off, thou wilt extreamly discourage and infeeble thy self, and blunt the edge of those weapons wherewith thou art to encounter thy Spiritual Enemies.

If

If thy Soul be upright in thee, if thou art sincere and hearty in imploring the aids of God's Grace and the assistances of his Spirit, and hast faith to be healed, and delivered from the Lusts that fight against thee, thou shalt undoubtedly see the salvation of the Lord. He will teach thine hands to war, and thy fingers to fight; he will gird thee with strength, and thou shalt be more than conquerour through Christ that loveth thee.

Though thou hast no might against that great company that cometh against thee, against flesh and bloud, principalities and powers, yet if thou waitest on the Lord, and art of good courage, he will strengthen thine heart, he will strengthen thee with strength in thy soul, and through him thou shalt do valiantly, and tread down thine enemies. He that is in thee will be greater than they that are in the world, viz. the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life.

Take heed therefore of all such reasonings, suggestions and principles as tend to beget a despondency and fainting of Spirit, but lift up the hands which hang down, and the feeble knees. To the Soul that believes, all things are possible. Let Faith say unto any mountain of difficulty, be thou removed, and it shall be done. Who art thou, O great mountain? before this blessed Grace, and in the exercise of it, thou shalt become a plain. Thy Self-will and Lusts are therefore strong, because thy Faith is weak, and thou in that regard makest but a faint resistance. But if thou wert strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, if thou didst resist, stedfast in faith, thou shouldest see thine Adversaries flye before thee. This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith, 1 John v. 4. Above all take the shield of faith,

*faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked, Eph. vi. 16.*

Glorious things are spoken of thee, O Faith, who can recount the mighty acts and great achievements of those holy Souls, who have strongly confided in the gracious power of God and Christ Jesus for the *subduing* of sin, as well as in God's mercy and Christ's merits for the *pardon* of it. These through this Faith (that I may borrow those expressions in the Eleventh to the Hebrews) *have subdued Kingdoms*, even the Kingdoms of divers lusts and pleasures, and the Kingdoms of the Prince of this world to which they were once subject : Through Faith *they have wrought righteousness*, even the righteousness of God, far excelling that outward slight and partial righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees : Through Faith *they have stopped the mouths of Lions*, the impetuous and ravening sollicitations, and greedy desires of their selfish will : Through Faith *they have quenched the violence of fire*, (or the Lusts of Passion, Malice and Uncleaness, which burned like fire within them) *out of weakness were made strong, and turned to flight the armies of the Aliens.*

Now there are many exceeding great and precious promises scattered through the Scriptures which are of sovereign force and virtue for the encouragement of our Faith and Hope in God, for the strengthening of us against his and our enemies ; But there is abundantly enough in that one passage, Luke xi. 13. *If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your Children : how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him.* What could our Saviour have spoken more plainly and fully for

our encouragement to a dependance on God for Grace and Spiritual strength, and to a quiet unsolicitous expectation of assistance from him?

This promise concerned not onely those Disciples that heard Christ preach then from the Mount, but all his Disciples and Followers, all that shall believe on his Name to the end of the world. It is said ----- *to them that ask him*, without any limitation either to a certain age or people, language or nation; and therefore we may be as much comforted from these words, as if we had been in the number of those in whose hearing our Saviour preached that best of Sermons, wherein they were uttered: For, as there is the same need of the Holy Spirit for *us* as there was for *them* who were then present with our Saviour, so there is now, and ever will be, the same benignity and philanthropy in God, the same good will, compassion, and love to men, that there was then and in former ages. He is *without variableness or shadow of turning, the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever.*

But this word of promise is so rich and precious, that it deserves a more particular Consideration.

*If ye that are evil*] Earthly Parents are too commonly envious and niggardly, close, hard, and cruel to others, being all for themselves, and not caring for the good of others.

----- *Know how to give good gifts unto your Children*] As backward as they are to give to others, they cannot find in their hearts when their Children ask, to withhold from them, they will be free, open-handed, and bountiful to them: And such is the tenderness of their affection to their Children, that they will not give them any thing  
that

that they know to be evil and hurtful to them; they will not give them Stones for Bread, a Serpent for a Fish, or a Scorpion for an Egg.

*How much more shall your heavenly Father*] He who being good cannot but do good; He who is *the Father of Mercies, the God of Love and Goodness, and Love it self*; He who best knows what is good, and is best able to bestow whatsoever is so; He who is as willing to do us good as he is able, and as able as willing, (as no earthly Parent is) He in whom is nothing of envy towards others, and hath in himself all fulness, is Infinite, Almighty, and All-sufficient.

----- *Give the holy Spirit to them that ask him*; so saith one Evangelist, and *give good things*, saith another. The greatest good that Omnipotence it self and infinite Goodness can do for us, is the giving the holy Spirit, and with him spiritual light to know, and spiritual strength to do *his* Will, and to subdue our *own* Wills, and whatsoever is contrary to him in us. To be indued with the holy Spirit doth import an accession both of light and strength, knowledge and power.

So that our Saviour argues from the less to the greater, from the drop of goodness and benignity in Creatures, and those sinful Creatures too, to that Fountain-fulness which is in God. What good soever children may expect from their Parents, that, and infinitely more, may God's Children expect from him. And it is impossible to conceive that the infinitely good God will be more wanting to his Childrens *Souls*, than are evil men to their Childrens *Bodies*.

All that *εὐπν*, those affections and tender-  
nesses which God hath implanted in all Parents  
for

for the good of their Off-spring, are but a little drop to that Ocean of Love and Mercy that is in himself; are but a dark and short representation of those unconceivable riches of Goodness, and bowels of Compassion which are in him. *Nul-lus Pater tam Pater, No Father is so fatherly, so much a Father as God is*, said *Tertullian*. He is *μητροπάτωρ* (as *Clemens Alexandrinus* styles him out of *Orpheus*) the tenderesses of both a Father and Mother are in God. Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb, yea, they may forget, (it is possible, but very prodigious) yet will not I forget, saith God, *Isaiah* xlix. 15.

God doth not take empty titles to himself, but fills up the utmost of whatsoever relation he is set forth by in the Holy Scriptures. Whatsoever the wisest, most careful and loving Parents are to *theirs*, God is such, and incomparably more, to *his* Children.

If the affections of ten thousand Parents were in one Father or Mother, how secure would the Child be of their tender care, (who indeed is secure without such a supposal) but all these in one person are far short of God's affection, who is the Spring and Original of all the Fatherly tenderness which is diffused in the hearts of so many millions of Fathers, as are in the world.

Let me add this, That *the promise of the Spirit* is the great promise of the Gospel, the great privilege of the Evangelical Dispensation or New Covenant. Greater aids and supplies of Grace, for the subduing our corruptions, we are encouraged to hope for under the Gospel. The Apostle saith, *Titus* iii. 6. that the Holy Ghost is shed on us abundantly (*πλουσίως*, in a rich and plentiful

plentiful manner) *through Jesus Christ our Saviour.*

If therefore we be not stronger, if we are not better, it is because we resist, or at least neglect, the Holy Spirit. It is because we have not *faith in God*, not because he is unwilling to help and assist us: For what saith St. James, chap. iv. 5, 6. *The Spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy, but God giveth more grace: He gives grace in such a measure as to overpower that Spirit that lusteth in us. So that, for that περισσeia κακίας, abundance of wickedness, (as the expression is James 1. 21.) there is περισσeia χάριτος, an abundance of grace, (as the phrase is Rom. 5. 17.) which the regenerate and believing Soul receiveth by Jesus Christ. For it pleased the Father, that in him should all fulness dwell, that of his fulness all might receive even grace for grace. And this grace shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.*

Col. 1. 19.  
Rom. v.  
21.

Thus you see what abundant encouragement we have *to have faith in God* for the supplies of his Grace and Spirit, and what reason we have to take heed of unbelief, if ever we would master our sinful affections, and bring our wills into compliance with the Will of God.

And there is a double unbelief we are to beware of, as very hurtful to our Souls.

First, An Unbelief in relation to the *mercy* of God for the pardon of Sin.

Secondly, An Unbelief in relation to the *power and goodness* of God for the subduing of Sin.

Now it is much to be lamented that whereas the former sort of unbelief is much taken notice of and condemned in Sermons and Books, the latter is but little mentioned. But if the evil of this

this were no less clearly and powerfully represented than the evil of the other, and men were as effectually warned to beware of this as of that Unbelief, it would, through the blessing of God, be an excellent means to make more sincere, strong and healthy Christians: Whereas alas! the spirits and lives of the generality of Professors do now too plainly declare that they had rather have sin pardoned than subdued, that they had rather sin should not be imputed to them, than destroyed in them.

But the compleat Faith is this in opposition to that twofold Unbelief.

First, To believe that Christ came to make expiation for sin, so that it shall be pardoned to those that do truly repent. That is, to those that being sensible of their sins, and are affected with a godly sorrow for them, and an holy hatred and abhorrence of them, desire and purpose above all things to walk before God in newness of life. Which conditions of pardon and non-imputation of sin are by too many either not at all, or but slightly insisted on, while they press the duty of recumbence, and relying on Christ's merits for Justification and Salvation.

Secondly, To believe that as Christ came to make atonement for sin, so he was manifested also for this purpose, that *he might destroy the works of the Devil*: And to procure grace for us, 1 Joh. iii. 8. whereby sin may have no more dominion over us. But this part of faith, I say, is little urged in comparison of the other, whereas it is of as great concernment to our eternal happiness to have Faith in the power of Christ, as to have Faith in his blood. Nay, (as appears from what hath been said) to have sin mortified, and to be enabled to will after the Will of God, is far more  
than

than to be meerly pardoned for willing otherwise than God doth will.

Now their defect in this latter part of Faith, is a great cause of Christians continuing so low and weak, lazy and faint, in a sickly and even bed-ridden condition, and of their fancying that they honour and please God by complaining of their impotence and infirmities; whereas the true way to please and honour him is, confiding in his omnipotent grace, to get up and be doing.

But I fear I may also add another reason why most of those that will confess their sins, and pray for grace and strength against them, are still as impotent, as if there were no grace or assistance promised; namely, their not being heartily *desirous* of grace, as well as their want of faith in the promises of it: Their unwillingness, whatsoever they pretend, to have some lust or other mortified, and to be thoroughly purified: Their secret fear of the searching and purging work of the Spirit, and of that light and grace that would disquiet them; and not let them alone in some sins to which they are fondly and tenderly devoted. It was one of *S. Austin's* Confessions: *I, when I was a young man, begged of thee that thou wouldst indue me with the grace of Chastity, and said, Give me Chastity, but not yet; for I feared lest thou shouldst presently hear me, and immediately heal me, and I had rather satisfy lust than have it extinguished.*

*Ego adole-  
lescens pe-  
tueram à te  
Castitatem,  
& dixi-  
ram, Da  
mibi Casti-  
tatem, sed noli modo: timebam enim ne me cito exaudires, & cito sanares,  
mallebam explere quam extinguere.* Confess. l. 8. cap. 7.

If this be thy case, (whosoever thou art that readest these lines) if this be the state and temper of thy Soul, then in thy complaining of weakness,

ness, and that the sons of *Zervia* are too hard for thee, and in thy praying for the assistance of God's grace against them, thou dost no better than add sin to sin, the sin of false dealing with God, and wicked hypocrisie to that of Unbelief; *thy heart is not right with God, and thou lyeest unto him with thy tongue.*

But to conclude this: Let us take heed lest there be in any of us an evil heart of Unbelief, and so we fall short of the Spiritual *Cannan*, and entring into the rest of God, as it befel the unbelieving Israelites, who perished in the Wilderness, and none of all that came out of *Egypt* entred into *Canaan* but *Caleb* and *Joshuah*, men of another Spirit, and that followed God fully; who were full of Faith, and encouraged the people to believe and prosper.

And it is observable that *Caleb* asked for the mountainous Countrey where the *Anakims* dwelt, *Joshuah* and the Cities were great and fenced, by the news of which the evil Spies dismayed *Israel*; but *Caleb* gave proof of the strength of his Faith, in freely chusing to expose himself to the hard and seemingly impossible service of gaining this Countrey, and was rewarded with success answerable to so great a faith: for we read that he drave out the three sons of *Anak*, notwithstanding that it was commonly said, *Who can stand before the sons of Anak?* He made it manifest that Faith could stand before them and overcome them. *Joshuah* xiv. 12.

And if we have *Caleb's* Faith in the power and goodness of God in fighting with the Spiritual *Anakims*, we may be most undoubtedly assured of *Caleb's* success. Chap. xv. 14.

Let

Let the Spiritual *Israel* therefore encourage themselves in the Lord their God, and they may be certain that it shall be unto them according to their faith; *his grace shall be sufficient for them; and when the enemy shall come in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against them.*

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## C H A P. VI.

*Of the wonderful efficacy of Love to God and Divine things.*

VI. **S**ixthly, Labour to be affected as much as is possible with the Love of God and Divine things. To Faith add Love, they are joyned together in Scripture, and should be conjoyned in the hearts of Christians. In *1 Thessalonians* 5. 8. Love as well as Faith is called a breast-plate, whereby we may be secured against the assaults of temptations.

If the Love of God be perfected in us, we shall find Self-denial and *Self-Resignation* as easie and pleasant as heart can wish. Love will make us think nothing precious that God will have us part with: it will make us with great chearfulness to part with a *right eye*, a *right hand*, our own will *if it offend us*. It will make us without grudging to cross our own will, when it contradicts the Will of our Beloved. It will cause us to believe no suffering harsh that God shall inflict, no duty difficult which he shall command. *This is the love of God, that we keep his Commandments, and his Commandments are not grievous,* *1 John* 5. 3.

*If you love me* is a familiar and potent form of speech

1 Tim. i.

14.

2 Tim. i.

13.

speech with us, to perswade one another to the doing or forbearing any thing; and what *humane* love doth work among men, that and much more will be effected by *divine* Love. This is a far more powerful and vigorous principle of action. And yet the effects of that Love have been very strange and wonderful, the observation whereof hath caused them to be sung by Poets, and copiously set forth in Romances, which are imitations of true Histories.

*Solus amor est qui nomen difficultatis erubescit:* It is Love alone that is ashamed to mention difficulty, saith St. *Austin*. Nay, Love welcomes difficulties, and pleaseth it self in hard instances of obedience, because by them it sheweth forth more of its reality, strength and power: Easie and ordinary performances being but mean and short significations of a hearty love. And the greatest and bravest atchievements, such acts as are most heroick, as denying our selves in what is most dear to us, are the true and proper results and expressions of divine Love; these are the worthy exploits of this holy affection.

Love makes the noblest Champions in the *Holy War* against Sin, the World, and Satan, and animates a Christian to the greatest adventures. As for easie and common performances, *ἀσάρατος ἰουβήνα*, a cheap and costless Religion, and Self-denial in small matters, viz. in such things as a man is but little inclined to, and are less for his pleasure and advantage, the divine Love is less solicitous about *them*: But it chuseth rather to awaken and animate the Soul to the harder services of Religion. It doth not think it quitteth it self in engaging against the weaker lusts, or in taking some of the slight out-works, but it

sets it self against the most powerful Corruptions, it plants its batteries against *ἰχυρώματα*, the strong holds, the inmost Fort where Self-will hath ensconced her self. The weapons of its warfare are not carnal but mighty through God, to the pulling down of strong holds, casting down imaginations (or reasonings, *λογισμὸς*) and every high thing that exalteth it self against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.

There is a lion in the way is the voice of the cold and lazy Sluggard, but this is no discouragement to the Lover of God, it affrights him not: Nay, so far is this Love from being cooled and disheartned by difficulties and oppositions, that it is rather kindled and improved: By these it heightens it self into an holy indignation against whatsoever would attempt to draw it from God. *Many waters cannot quench love; neither can the floods drown it:* Nay, as water cast into lime, they increase instead of lessening its heat.

Love, though it be a soft and delicate affection, yet it is hardy and strong withall: *Love is strong as death;* and it is as ingenuous and noble as strong: for if a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be condemned. Neither the hard and evil things which the world threatens, nor the most tempting allurements of the world or the flesh, can either affright or corrupt that heart, where the divine Love rules, from a faithful adhering to the will of God. But to the several temptations it meets with in the world, this is the constant resolute answer of every holy Lover, (as it was Joseph's) *How can I do this wickedness and sin against God?*

Yea,

Yea, Love enables a Christian to do his duty much sooner and better. That which is in others the effect of great severity to the body, long fastings and other toilsome exercises often repeated, is done in a more compendious and effectual way by the power of Love, in such Christians, as are indued with a more than ordinary measure of it.

Now that this Divine Love may be inkindled in us, and the flame of it more and more increased;

First, *Let us very often lift up the eyes of our mind, and fix them upon those infinitely lovely perfections, glories and excellencies that are in God, which the holy Scriptures do so abound with the mention and celebrations of.* Let us view these frequently in the Scriptures, and also in the works of Creation and Providence. Let us often consider with our selves how that all the lovelinesses and sweetnesses that are in Creatures, are but so many drops from the fountain of them, that is God: and that every Love-attracting excellency, every thing which the world calls precious and desirable, is but a very weak resemblance of what is to be tasted and enjoyed in him.

Secondly, *Let us also as frequently contemplate those transcendent and invaluable mercies and favours, those numberless benefits and kindnesses which we stand obliged to God for.* And above all, that Gift of Gifts, his Son, in whom he expressed a Love to us *that passeth knowledge.*

Would we have the fire of holy Love kindled in our Breasts, let us, I say, dwell very much in the admiring contemplation of the Divine Excellencies, and the Divine Benefits.

The Contemplation of the infinite Perfections that are in God will render all things contemptible compared with him, and consequently make them weak, unperswading, untempting things.

*Videnti  
Deum om-  
nis creatu-  
ra est an-  
gusta.*

*Dejecit se  
de culmine  
generosita-  
tis suae, qui  
admirari  
aliquid  
post Deum  
potest. Cy-  
prius de  
spectacu-  
lis.*

What *Pythagoras* said he learned by his Philosophy, *μὴδὲν θαυμάζειν*, to admire nothing, we shall learn by this Contemplation. When the Soul hath inured her self to view the Divine Glories, how near to nothing is this, *τὸ πᾶν*, the whole Universe in its eyes, what a little spot and point? When she hath been upon the Mount with God, and ravished her self with his astonishing beauty, she must needs be affected with such a magnanimity and generosity of spirit, as will courageously repel the strongest temptations she meets with to withdraw her from a close union and conjunction of will and affection to him.

And the consideration of the innumerable and transcendent Blessings we receive from God, will work in us such an ingenuous gratitude as will excite us to give up our hearts and our *all* to him.

The excellencies of his Nature, and the exceeding riches of his Bounty, will represent him as most worthy to be known *ὡς ἄνθη*, with the flower of our mind, as *Zoroaster* expresseth it, and our highest apprehensions: And to be loved with the flower of our hearts; so that our sweetest and dearest affections will not be thought too precious for him.

Let us briefly reflect upon the power of worldly and sensual Love, and see what this will do.

First, *The love of Money*, how doth this oblige and enforce the men of this world to hard labours, dangerous adventures, anxious cares? To rise early, sit up late, eat the bread of sor-

rows,

rows, to deny themselves many of the comforts and contents of this life, to fare hardly, and to live a toylsome and painful life ; and in a word, ( to use the Apostles phrase ) *to pierce themselves through with many sorrows ?*

Secondly, *The Love of Honour, Dignities and Preferments.* How doth it put ambitious men upon restless labours, tedious attendances, servile offices, base flatteries and compliances ? Such stick at nothing for the obtaining their ends, devote and surrender themselves to the will and humour of their *Patron*, as if he were their God, and they *his* Creatures more than *God's*. They deport and address themselves to *him*, by whose favour they hope to be raised, in such a form of respect and devotion, as approacheth near to that regard and reverence which is only due to the most high God. So full of zeal and observance is this civil kind of Superstition.

Thirdly, *The Love of Beauty.* What a strange power and force hath it upon the fond man ? To him no services, no sufferings seem grievous that his Mistress wills him to undertake. With all submission and devotion he admires and adores this his Souls Idol, this Deity of Clay, and that in such strains, as blasphemously resemble that most affectionate and humble devotion which none but his Creator may challenge from him. He gives her his whole heart, and resigns his whole will to her will, complies with all her humours, yields an entire obedience to all her commands, be they never so unreasonable. He patiently suffers tedious delays and waitings, meekly bears her frowns, affronts and disdains, her harsh language and hard usage, and all the other arts she

hath of afflicting him; besides the troubles and hazards he sometimes meets with from his Rivals. This Love Bigot, such is his devotion, neglects himself, his rest, his food, his health, renounceth all his own contentments, and denies himself in whatsoever is for either his delight or advantage, if he understands it to be the pleasure of his Mistress: He mortifies himself, pines and consumes, and is lean from day to day for her, as lustful *Amnon* was for *Tamar*. These, and such like, are the *severe Penances*, *Mortifications* and *Austerities* that this man is wont to undergo in this idolatrous *Love-service*: yea, and sometimes he sacrificeth his very life, which the poor wretch calleth Love's Martyrdom.

Here is Self-denial, *Self-Resignation* with a witness. With what a deal of pains and trouble doth this poor creature purchase to himself misery? With much more ease and less vexation, had his love been placed upon the best of objects, he might have been happy to eternity: He might have lived with God, who is Love it self, holy and unspotted Love, and reigned with Christ the faithful lover of his Soul in a Kingdom of peace and joy for ever.

By these instances we may discern the strange force of a degenerate and impure Love, and what a degree of Self-renunciation it forceth those to, in whom it reigns.

And is the Love of uncertain *Riches*, a little white and yellow Clay so powerful with men, and shall not the Love of the *true durable Riches*, the glorious Inheritance in Heaven, *which is incorruptible and fadeth not away*, be more forceable?

Hath the Love of airy *Honour* such power,  
and

and shall not the Love of that Honour which is from God, that honour and glory that he hath promised to every soul that worketh good, that honour of shining forth as the sun in the Kingdom of the Father : shall not the love, I say, of such inexpressible honour as this, have as powerful effects upon us, and much more powerful ? Shall the Love of a fading Skin-beauty, the love of a little red and white, the love of withering Roses, and Lillies and Violets, with which fond Lovers bestick the Cheeks, and Hands and Veins of their Mistresses, besides I know not how many more such gay embellishments of their foolish fancies ; shall this impotent kind of love so potently command poor mortals, and shall not the Love of God do much more ? who is ἀψίχαλον, the first-fair and original Beauty, as well as πρῶτον ἀγαθόν, the first good, whom Angels, the flower and top of the Creation, admire and adore with the greatest complacency and ardor of affection.

Shall not Love fixed upon such an object as this inflame us with an holy resolution to undertake or undergo any thing for the fulfilling and satisfaction of his Will ? Considering withal, that his Commands are ( as hath been shewn ) in themselves most reasonable, most fit to be approved and observed by us, agreeable to the dignity of our Souls, in their own nature most lovely, excellent and worthy, and have moreover a mighty recompence of reward ; which cannot be said of the Commands of Lust, and sensual impure Love, but the perfectly contrary ; they being most vain and foolish, unreasonable and cruel, and obedience to them of most pernicious and sad consequence.

Nor is there any thing that God would have us

part withal, but what it is better for us to be without ; better for our ease, peace and pleasure, and more for our liberty to be freed and disintangled from : As hath been already proved.

And so I pass to that other branch of this Direction, viz. that we should labour to be affected with a strong and ardent Love, as of *God*, so of *Divine things* : of Vertue and Holiness, the impressions of the Divine Image upon the Soul.

Had we a worthy resentment of Spiritual Excellencies, and a due sense of the beauty of Holiness, they would even ravish our hearts, and *mirabiles amores excitare, excite in us strange and wonderful affections to them*, ( as *Tully* speaks of Vertue ) and consequently secure us from the allurements and attractions of any earthly vanity whatsoever.

But till a man comes to admire and be enamoured with the Divine Graces and Vertues, every thing will be ready to get his heart which gratifieth sensuality, and to carry him away captive.

By one unacquainted with the loveliness of Holiness will the least twinkling of this worlds glory be admired ; but there can be no better way to put by and frustrate the attempts and temptations of the *things below*, than to be well acquainted and greatly affected with the *things above*, the things that are Holy, Heavenly, and Divine.

That of *Plutarch* was a most true and excellent observation, *ὅτι μὴ δύναται ἄνθρωπος ζῆλον ἔχειν, &c.* It is impossible for men not to have a great affection and ambition for the things which the world admires and pursues, except there be a principle within them to admire vertue, whose alone beauty and lustre would darken and put out all other glories, and gayeties whatsoever.

Be

Be fully possess then with the importance of this truth, that the most sovereign way for a man to take off his mind and heart from the admired vanities of this world, and consequently *to deny himself*, is plainly this: To turn his mind and affections to better objects, to admire the uncreated and original beauty, and to have an high esteem of the participations and impressions thereof.

The affections will not be stopt or pent in, they will run out upon something; let them therefore issue forth, but let it be to the noblest objects, let them stream forth freely, but, to better things. There is such a way approved by Physicians for the stopping of blood, *viz.* When it issueth out one way, to open a vein elsewhere, and so to stay it by revulsion, and diverting the course.

Nor is that Fable of the Poet unfit to be applied here, as containing an excellent Moral, which tells us the best means of defeating the *Sirens*, the most dangerous temptations of the world. *Ulysses* and his Companions stopt their ears with wax, as they sailed by, that they might not hear them, and so avoided the danger: But *Orpheus*, by singing divine Hymns, by celebrating the praises of God, and recounting his Excellencies and Favours, is said to have overcome them, which was the more noble way of Conquest.

But to prevent all mistake and scruple, I add that what hath been said doth not imply that a Christian is to dam and stop up his affections from issuing out to any thing here in this world: But thus we are to consider.

There are undue and forbidden, and there are due and allowed objects of the affections.

Now

Now as for *undue* objects, the pleasures of any kind of sin, the things which God expressly forbids in the Holy Scriptures, we are to have no affection at all for, but the greatest antipathy against. There must not be the least tasting of the forbidden Tree, though its fruit be never so fair and tempting.

But as for *due* objects of the affections, and such as God allows, our care must be that they be carried forth towards them in a due order, and a due degree.

First, *in a due order*. Our Love must first be placed upon God and Christ, his Kingdom and his Righteousness, and thence descend to inferior good things. Things Divine must have the precedency and priority in our care and endeavours, according to that advice of our Saviour, *Matth. vi. 33*.

Secondly, *In a due degree and measure*. God and the things above must be most desired, loved and delighted in. *Whom* (saith the Psalmist) *have I in heaven but thee, and there is none on earth I can desire in comparison of thee*, Psalm lxxiii. 25. God alloweth us to give a lesser love to the lesser goodness; but the highest affection is to be given to the Highest and Original Goodness.

I will conclude this Direction with the agreeing advice of *Taulerius* in his eighth Epistle: *Omnem diem inter amissos deputate, in quo, Dei amore propriam non fregistis voluntatem. Account that day as mispent and lost, wherein you have not subdued your own will by the Love of God.*

This advice imports two things.

First, That a Christian is to make this great Duty of *Self-Resignation* his daily business; that 'tis a lesson which he is to be every day learning,

ing, and an Exercise in which he is to make continual progress.

Secondly, That *the Love of God* is of most sovereign force and virtue to break and subdue a man's own will.

## C H A P. VII.

*That Humility is a powerful means to the attaining of Self-Resignation, where it is particularly shewn, how it is effectual thereunto both as it implieth obedience to God's Commands, and as it implies patient submission to his disposals.*

VII. **S**eventhly, Endeavour after the deepest humility, and sink thy self into the greatest Self-nothingness, if thou wouldst be truly resigned to the Will of God. Humility is a most powerful and excellent means to the attaining of *Self-Resignation*, both as it implies obedience to God's Commands, and submission to his disposals.

First, *As it implies Obedience to the Commands of God.* The humble Christian cannot think much of doing any thing God requires of him, or forbearing any thing he forbids him: For,

First, He considers that there is an unconceivable infinite distance between God and him. That God is infinite in Essence and all Perfections, in Glory and Majesty: That he is the Lord of all things, the Sovereign of Men and Angels, and therefore 'tis most fit that he should have the preheminance in all things; and most disbecoming him to oppose his Will when he commands things never so ungrateful to flesh and blood.

And

And he considers also that himself is a limited, dependent, indigent Being, that he is nothing but what he is by God, and can have nothing but what comes from him; and consequently, that 'tis the most unreasonable thing in the world, that his Will should ever take place of the Will of God. The infinite Superiority of God's Being most justly and plainly infers the precedency and superiority of his Will.

He considers that God is the inexhaustible Fountain of Life, the great Ocean of Being, whence all the Rivers of particular Beings flow, and whither they return again; whereas man is a poor, feeble Creature, *altogether vanity*, and that *at his best estate*, (as the *Psalmist* speaks) *even all the nations of the earth are counted but as a drop of the bucket; or small dust of the ballance*, (as *Isaiah* speaks) *nay, they are all as nothing before God, and are counted to him less than nothing*. What then shall we think of each particular man, he being so inconsiderable a part of that drop, that *dust*, that *nothing*, and *less than nothing*. The humble Christian, I say, hath a due sense of his unconceiveably vast and infinite disproportion and disparity to God; and thence concludes, that nothing can be so unreasonable as to expect his will should be humoured, or to take it ill to have it crost by the Will of God.

He is deeply sensible that nothing is so intolerable, as for the will and pleasure of a creature in any thing to controul and over-rule the Lord of Life and Glory, the Father of the Universe, the great Maker and Preserver of all things, and therefore that it is much more, the greatest petulancy, the vilest sauciness, and most horrible presumption for such a Creature as himself to dis-

*Psalm* 39. 5.

*Chap.* xl.

15.

*Ver.* 17.

dispute and quarrel with the Divine Commands.

Secondly, The humble Christian considers also, that God, being Self-happy and Self-sufficient, cannot design his own advantage in laying his Commands upon us; that we are not able to gratifie him by any service, but, being infinitely good, he aims at our benefit in so doing: That God in the business of Religion, and the precepts he requires our observance of, seeks not his own, but meerly *our* interest and welfare; in that, I say, he needs not, nor is capable of receiving any additions of happiness, much less from without himself, and therefore he gratifieth, and means kindness to us, in all his Commands; and his Laws are to be numbred among his *Favours*, even his most *endearing* and *obliging* ones. And he who is thus assured must needs be strongly excited to perform a most hearty, ingenuous and chearful obedience to all the declarations of the Divine Will.

Secondly, *Humility fits and enables us for Resignation, as it also imports patient Submission to all God's Disposals: And that,*

First, *Upon the same account that we now said it disposeth to active Obedience: Namely, because it makes us sensible of the infinite disproportion that is between God and us; the consideration of which will necessarily convince us, that it becomes such despicable Creatures as we are, to humble our selves under his mighty hand, to lay our selves down in the dust before him, instead of fretting and repining at his Providence.*

Secondly, *Humility disposeth to Patience, as it will make us sensible of our moral defects and imperfections, our sins and transgressions, whereby we are become obnoxious to God's displeasure. The*  
sense

sense whereof will force us to acknowledge that he is most righteous whensoever he punisheth, and therefore we should *accept of the punishment of our iniquity.*

Murmuring and complaining thoughts arise from Pride, and a too good opinion of our selves: 'Tis *Self-conceit* that makes us misconstrue any of God's dealings as over-rigorous and harsh towards us. But to the humble man, who is sensible of his manifold miscarriages, they appear most just, right and equal, nay, very *gentle* too, in comparison of his deserts.

He having a deep sense of the Evil of Sin, how unreasonable, unjust and disingenuous, and therefore how unspeakably hainous a thing it is to oppose the Will of the most High God, the Supreme Governour of the World, and Judge of all the Earth, to offend infinite Goodness, and to return evil to him from whom we have always received good, and to whom our Engagements are inexpressibly many and great; I say, the humble Christian having a great sense of this, and being conscious to himself that he hath been this unreasonable, unrighteous, and disingenuous Creature, will under the sharpest afflictions he can suffer in this world, say with Ezra: *Thou hast punished me less than mine iniquities do deserve.*

Thirdly, *Humility disposeth to Submissive bearing afflictions*, as it will make us sensible of the exceeding shortness of our understandings, our great folly and utter disability to fathom God's Counsels, and the reasons of his Providences. The Humble Christian will cry out with the blessed Apostle, *O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!* He knows that

that infinite and unsearchable Wisdom must needs administer the affairs of the world in general, and of every person in particular, in the best and wisest way, and therefore that there is very great reason for whatsoever sufferings he undergoes, although they may seem to his shallow capacity to be never so unreasonable.

Murmuring at any of the Divine Providences is a tacit charging of God, as with *unrighteousness*, so with *folly*, and a setting up our Wisdom above God's.

Fourthly, *The humble Christian is likewise sensible of the great need he hath of afflictions.* That he needs them as Medicines to cure his spiritual Maladies, that they are needful as they are preventions of Sin, and secure against many temptations, and as they are very instructive; much of God and himself being to be learnt in the School of the Cross.

This man knoweth, that not to be corrected in order to his amendment is the greatest of punishments; and that no judgment is so dreadful as sin it self, and to be given up to an hard heart and feared conscience; and therefore he accounts those straits, troubles and difficulties, he ever and anon meets with, as expressions of God's unwillingness he should undo himself.

It is most certain that the Holy, Wise and Good God doth not directly and primarily will punishment, (as neither doth any good and wise Law-giver) to do thus is not justice but cruelty: Nor doth he desire the occasions of inflicting punishments, *viz.* the transgression of his Laws. Justice is wise and good, it hath ever the best of ends, namely the discountenancing and preventing of sin and evil, and the cherishing and encourage-

couragement of goodness, and securing the authority of righteous Laws. And the humble person considering that God's design in afflicting him is to cure the greater evil of sin, by the lesser of suffering, and that afflictions are so necessary, as that he is seldom long well without them, by this means is he the better enabled quietly to submit when he suffers under them.

Lastly, *Humility enables a Christian both to Obedience and Patience, as it makes him capable of more grace*: And the more grace the more power he hath both to do and suffer the Will of God. Surely (saith the Wise man) *he scorneth the scorers, but he giveth grace to the lowly*, Prov. iii. 34. And St. Peter 1 Epistle v. 5. *God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace to the humble*. And again St. James, Chap. iv. 5, 6. *The Spirit that dwelleth in us lusteth to envy, but he giveth more grace, wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble*.

The high mountains are barren, but the low valleys are covered over with Corn, and the showers of God's grace fall into lowly hearts and humble souls. The more poor in spirit, the more self-empty, the more earnestly desirous of spiritual things, and such shall be filled, according to Christ's promise, *Matth. v. 6. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled*.

You know the story in 2 Kings 4 chap. So long as the Widow had an empty Vessel the Oyl flowed, but when there was not another to be gotten, it immediately stayed. And so long as God seeth an empty soul that is ready to receive and desirous of his grace, he is ready to communicate of his fulness to it.

A Soul that is poor in its own eyes, void of self-glorying, and acknowledging its own indigence, and withall its utter unworthiness to receive any the least favour from the Divine Bounty, is such a one as God looks for, to communicate more and more of his Grace and Spirit to. *To this man will I look,* (saith God) *even to him that* Isaiah lxvi. 2. *is poor and of a contrite spirit, &c. And thus saith the high and lofty one that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy, I dwell in the high and holy place; with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit, to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the spirit of the contrite ones, Isaiah lviii. 15.*

Humility disposeth to gratitude, and gratitude fits us to receive more from God; for a grateful Soul will set a high value upon his blessings, and most gladly give him the glory of his grace. The humble Christian thinks himself, with *Jacob*, less than the least of all God's mercies, and consequently he will be heartily thankful for the least; and by being thus affected, he becomes meet for the greatest, and therefore cannot fail of it.

It is to be observed, that when *Jacob* was in this humble and self-abasing temper, it was that he saw God *face to face* at *Peniel*: Then it was that he was honoured with the name *Israel*, and as a Prince had power with God and men, and prevailed.

But on the contrary, Pride and Self-fulness, which is ever accompanied with unthankfulness, makes men incapable of receiving the Divine Grace: And therefore the *Pharisees*, who gloried in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others, that were not sick but whole and healthy in their own conceit, died of their dis-

eases, notwithstanding the great Physician of Souls was so long among them.

Now there are two graces that Humility gives a peculiar fitness for, two of the first magnitude and greatest influence, of the greatest use and consequence in a Christians life, viz. The *Love of God*, and *Faith* or *Trust in him*.

'Tis evident that Humility hath a peculiar fitness to cherish and increase the grace of *Love*, for the more sensible any one is of his great unworthiness and ill-deservings, the more he must needs love God for having so gracious a regard to him, the more will he admire and adore the riches of his Grace.

And 'tis as evident that Humility affordeth the like advantage for the Grace of *Faith*, or trust in God; for the more sensible a Christian is of his own impotence, the more will he rely upon the Divine Power and Goodness for the supply of his wants, having so many promises to encourage him. The sense of our own weakness will make us distrust our selves, the more we distrust our selves, the more shall we stay our Souls on God, and confide in his Wisdom, Power, and Grace.

Now we have particularly shewn, of how great efficacy both these Vertues are to enable us to this Duty of *Self-Resignation*.

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## C H A P. VIII.

*That the serious observation of the great Examples of Self-Resignation, which are recorded in the Scriptures, is of great use and advantage: And first of the Example of Abraham.*

VIII. **E**ighthly, Look to those lively Patterns and Examples of *Self-Resignation* set before us in the Holy Scriptures. These are of singular use and advantage to be seriously considered: For they plainly shew this holy disposition of spirit to be attainable, and that God requires herein nothing of us that is impossible.

Could *they* do thus, and cannot *we* by the same divine help and power do the like, which we have shewn is attainable by *us* as well as *them*? They were *ἁποστολικοί*, subject to like passions with *us*; they were flesh and blood as we are, and naturally as weak and infirm as our selves, and God is the same in Power and Goodness now that ever he was.

And this may commend to us the fulness of the Scriptures, that besides the best Precepts and Rules, we have the best Patterns and Examples recorded in them of every grace and virtue: So that by the guidance and assistance of the Holy Spirit, the Christian man *may be perfected, thoroughly furnished unto every good work.*

The best Rules of the best life are laid down in the divinely inspired Writings, and they are plain and intelligible, especially to those that have the *good and honest heart*; but Examples superadded to Rules, and Patterns to Precepts, make both more instructive, and as well *encourage*

rage as direct our Practice. And we having a many worthy Examples upon record of this *Self-Resignation*, the Lesson becomes neither too high nor hard for us to understand or practise.

How many Precepts have we in Scripture to engage us to Chastity and Purity, Meekness and Patience, Faith and Charity, to an holy resolvedness in owning of God, and adhering to his ways, and unweariedness in doing good, and to every other grace and virtue?

And have we not, besides others, the Example of *Joseph* for Chastity, *Moses* for Meekness, *Job* for Patience, *Abraham* for Faith, *Dorcas* and *Cornelius* for Charity, *Daniel* for an holy resolvedness of spirit in owning God, *S. Paul* for an unwearied Zeal, and above all, that Example of all Examples for every thing that is holy, pure and lovely, our Lord Jesus Christ?

Take we heed then that we be not found *ingentium exemplorum parvi imitatores*, small imitators of mighty examples, as *Salvian* expresseth it. But let it be our serious care and holy ambition to transcribe their virtues, to write after those fair Copies they have set us, to be followers of those blessed Souls wherein they were followers of God and Christ.

But our present argument determining us to *Self-Resignation*, let us consider some Examples hereof for our guidance and encouragement.

First, I will present you with that of *Abraham*, Faithful *Abraham*, as he is stiled by the Apostle *St. Paul*. There were ten trials wherewith God was pleased to exercise this good man, as they are collected out of his Story by the *Hebrew Writers*: The first and last of which ten were the forest of all.

The first was his being called and commanded of God, *Genesis* the twelfth, to leave his own Countrey, his House and Lands, his Friends and Kindred, and to go to a place he knew not.

This Command as unpleasant and grievous as it must needs have been to his flesh and blood, he did not in the least demurr upon obeying: But by Faith Abraham when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed, and he went out, not knowing whether he went, Heb. xi. 8.

The last was his being commanded to take his only Son *Isaac*, and to slay and offer him for a Burnt-offering, than which there could not be a greater trial.

We have the Command in *Genesis* xxii. 2. every word of which hath a singular Emphasis, and deserves attention.

Take now thy son, thine only son *Isaac*, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of *Moriah*, and offer him there for a burnt offering, upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

Take now thy Son---- Not a Beast for a Sacrifice, not any of the best of his great store of Cattle, but his Son.

Take him now, forthwith, without any delay\*.

Thy Son *Isaac*: Not *Ishmael* but *Isaac*, his and his Mothers delight and joy, as the name signifies.

Thine only Son: He and *Sarah* had no other to solace themselves in, nor were they ever like to have any other.

And besides there is another observable thing mentioned Heb. xi. 27. He that had received the promises offered up his only begotten Son, of whom

\* N<sup>o</sup> is the same here with *נָפֶשׁ* faith *Aben Ezra*.

*it was said, that in Isaac shall thy seed be called.*

Whom thou lovest : That is, very *dearly* and *passionately*, as being the Son of their old age, their only Son, and a Son of the promise. These two go together, *tender*, and *the only one*, Prov. iv. 3. *The only one*, and *the choice one*, Cant. vi. 9. To lose the *only* Son is that which causeth bitter lamentation ; and the mourning for such a one is used to express the most passionate and doleful mourning, *Amos* viii. 10. *Zech.* xii. 10. *Jer.* vi. 26.

----- *And get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there.* Abraham himself must offer him, he might not command his two servants to do it ; and they went no farther than till they came within sight of the place where he was to be offered.

The tender Father must take his *only Son*, whom he loved, and bind him with his own hands upon the Altar, and take the knife to slay him. As his eyes must behold him bleeding, and gasping, and burning ; so must he be himself the Executioner.

----- *And offer him there for a burnt-offering, on one of the mountains, which I will tell thee of.* This was the place where the Temple was to be built by Solomon, the place of offering Sacrifices.

And it was three days journey from Abraham's habitation, which might make the Command yet more grievous. As often as in that journey he looked upon the Wood, or Fire for burning the Sacrifice, or the knife that must do the Execution, on the place where it was to be done, which he saw afar off, how could it be otherwise but that his eye must most deeply affect his heart ?

It follows ver. vi. *And Abraham took the wood of the burnt-offering and laid it upon Isaac his Son, and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and they went both of them together.* What an affecting

affecting and heart-piercing sight was this! And herein was *Isaac* a Figure of our Blessed Saviour, who bare the wood of the Cross upon his Shoulders, whereon he was to be offered up for a Sacrifice to God.

And it is hence to be concluded, that *Isaac* was now no Child or weak Stripling, in that he was able to travel with so great a burden; such a quantity of wood as was sufficient to burn his body to ashes could be no small weight. *Iosephus* makes *Isaac* to be now twenty five years old, but an *Hebrew* Tradition, about thirty and three. If so, (and for what end should they feign it?) he was in *this* circumstance also a Figure of our Saviour, who was offered up at about the same age.

Now *Isaac* being at this time grown up to a good age and strength, it might make his Father the more unwilling to part with him, and considerably added to the greatness of his Trial.

The word נער is used of one that is of an adult

age, as of *Joshua*, Exod. xxxiii. 11. when about 53 years old; of *Benjamin*, when he was 30 years old, Gen. xliii. 8. and of *Joseph*, when about 28 years old: and the two young men accompanying them are called also נער. So that it should be rendred the young man, not Lad,

And those words of *Isaac* which he spake in a strain of sweet innocence and simplicity, v. 7. *My Father, behold the fire and the wood, but where is the Lamb for a Burnt-offering?* they must needs cause a great colluctation within him, and yerning of bowels: No doubt *Abraham's* affections did strangely work now, and he was pained at the very heart.

There is one thing more which we may take notice of in this Command of God, it is said, *Offer him there for a Burnt-offering; לעולה:*

This kind of Offering was an Holocaust, all of which was to be consumed by fire, so that there was not the least Relick to remain of him.

This was the Command, and was it not a most difficult one? could there have been a forer trial? But, behold the signal Resignation and Obedience of *Abraham* to the Will of God! He without the least delay or demurring, betook himself to the performance of the divine pleasure. It is said v. 3. that *Abraham rose up early in the morning*: it is like the Command came secretly to him in a dream, or vision of the night, and \* at or before the first peep of day, he addressed himself to obey it. Thus he denied his natural and very great affection to his Son, and gave a most illustrious proof, that nothing was so dear to him, nothing so powerful with him as the Will of God: *Wisdom kept him strong against his tender compassion towards his son*, saith the Author of the Book of Wisdom, chap. x. 5.

The completion of his Obedience is set forth in the ninth verse: *And Abraham built an Altar in the place which God told him of, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his Son, and laid him on the Altar upon the wood.*

To those words, they went both of them together, v. viii. the Jerusalem Targum addes

**שְׁפוּ כָלֶךְ** with a just and upright heart; and **וּמִכְשָׁל וּמִכְשָׁל** with a quiet, humble and submissive heart. Yea, both the Targum of Jerusalem and Jonathan Ben-Uziel, make Isaac speak to Abraham, that he would bind him strongly, and then meekly and quietly to offer himself to become a Sacrifice.

again

again (as in several other particulars) was he a Figure of our Saviour, who, though he could have rescued himself from the power of the Jews and Romans, yet permitted them to take and bind him, to heap a many vile indignities upon him, and at last to nail him to his Cross.

And then it follows,----- *And Abraham stretch-  
ed forth his hand, and took the knife to slay his Son:*

This God accounted to him as if he had done it; because he was fully purposed in his mind to do it, and had it not been for God's interposition, had performed his purpose. Therefore the Scrip-  
*Completa voluntas pro facto aestimatur.*

ture reports it as if he had actually offered up his Son: Heb. xi. 17. *By faith Abraham when he was tried, offered up Isaac: and he that had received the promises offered up his only begotten Son.* And James ii. 21. *Was not Abraham our Father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his Son upon the Altar?* And hereupon (as it follows ver. 23.) *he was called the friend of God.* He eminently approved him as such for this high act of obedience. This is a title thrice given him in Scripture, in this place, 2 Chron. xx. 7. and *Esay* xli. 8. and implied in *Gen.* xviii. 17. *Shall I hide from Abraham the thing that I do?* Where *Philo* addes τὸ φίλος μου, *Shall I hide from Abraham my friend.* And by this Periphrasis the friend of God, without any mention of his name, is he described in the *Alcoran*, the *Turks Bible*.

I will conclude this great Example of Resignation with that in *Esay* xli. 2. *who raised up the righteous man from the East, and called him to his foot: Abraham* was sequacious, and obeyed God in all things; he had him at his call, as the Faulconer hath a well man'd Hawk, and calls her to his hand.

And

And shall not the Spiritual Seed of *Abraham*, for so Christians are, be sequacious and observant of every call of God, though he call them to such trials as are very difficult and ungrateful? *Let us walk in the steps*, of the faith and obedience, of our Father *Abraham*, in readily sacrificing our *Isaac*, our delight and joy, that sin which is most beloved, the sin of our souls, (as the phrase is *Micah* vi. 7.) which seems to bring us most profit, and most delight and pleasure. By thus doing shall we be owned as the especial Friends and Favorites of God, as *Abraham* was, and receive the reward of such, as he did.

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## CHAP. IX.

### *Of the Example of JOB.*

IX. **S**Econdly, The next Example of *Self-Resignation* shall be that of upright and holy *Job*: And he will appear to be a most memorable and eminent one, by these following Particulars.

First, *He was a Great man*: Great for *Estate* and *Riches*. We read that he had seven thousand Sheep, three thousand Camels, five hundred yoke of Oxen, five hundred She-Assees, and very great store of Servants: That he was the greatest of all the men of the East, that is of *Arabia*, which lay Eastward from the Land of *Canaan*. He was great for *Wisdom*, and by that means for *Honour* and *Esteem*: of which there is a particular account, Chap. xxix. *The aged men when they saw him, arose and stood up, ver. 8. The Princes refrained talking, and laid their hand upon their mouth; the Nobles held their peace, and their tongue*

*tongue cleaved to the roof of their mouth, ver. 9, 10. Such a reverence had they for him, for the greatness of his Wisdom and excellent accomplishments, that the ear that heard him blessed him, ver. 11. All gave ear to him, and waited and kept silence at his counsel: After his words they spake not again, his speeches dropped upon them, and they waited for him as for the rain, and opened their mouth wide as for the latter rain, ver. 22, 23. They received his discourse as a welcome and most desirable rain, and such especially was טל קיץ the latter rain, before Harvest, for making the Corn more plump and fair.*

Secondly, He was as Good as Great and Honourable. Such was his Humility, that he did not despise the cause of his man-servant or maid-servant, when they contended with him, Chap. xxxi. 13.

His Sobriety and Moderation of Spirit is to be seen, v. 25, &c.

His Charity and Compassion, Chap. xxix. 13, 15, 16. Chap. xxx. 25. Chap. xxxi. 16, 17, 19, 20, 32.

His great Chastity, Chap. xxxi. 1, 9. So far was he from making his great Estate to serve Sensuality and Lust.

His Integrity and Honesty, Ch. xxix. 14. Chap. xxxi. 7, 38, 39.

His readiness to employ his power and interest for the relief, and not for the crushing, of oppressed Innocents, Chap. xxix. 12. Chap. xxxi. 21. And this he did boldly and resolvedly, Ch. xxxi. 34.

His exemplary Piety in keeping himself from the Idolatries of the Arabians, Chap. xxxi. 26, 27. His pious sollicitude for his Children, in their yearly Feastings, lest they might have offended God in

in the heat of their Banquets, Chap. i. 5. And Chap. xxiii. 11, 12. we have him expressing the great devotion of his Soul towards God, in the *constancy and universality* of his Obedience. *My foot (saith he) hath held his steps, his way have I kept, and not declined, neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips: I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food.*

And God himself gives this character of Job, Chap. ii. 3. *That there was none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil.*

Thus was this excellent Person a great Pattern of all kinds of Vertue in his flourishing estate, and he was no less a Pattern of *Self-Resignation* in his afflictions and trials: For,

Thirdly, This Great and Good man was *forely afflicted and tried by God*. There were three Messengers that brought him the tidings of sad Calamities that besel him in his Possessions; his Oxen, Asses, Sheep and Camels, with his Servants being carried away by the *Sabeans* and *Chaldeans*, or consumed by fire from heaven. But the fourth Messenger brings the heaviest news of all, *viz.* That all his Sons and Daughters were crusht to pieces by the fall of the house wherein they were feasting.

This was dismal indeed, to lose all his Children at once, and that not by a natural but violent death, and to have them destroyed with such a sudden destruction, and that also in the midst of their feasting and mirth.

But besides, the more to aggravate his affliction, these several Messengers came immediately one after another, while one was speaking another

ther came in; one wave, the more to overwhelm him, came upon the neck of the other; so that he had no respite, no time to concoct his sorrows, no diversion, no time of breathing to prepare himself to bear the next.

But after all this, affliction comes nearer still and more close to him. God permitted Satan to exercise his cruelty upon his *Body*, which was stricken with sore boyls, and that all over, even from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, Chap. ii. 7. He was full of anguish in every part \*. There was nothing about him left whole and entire but the *skin of his teeth*, Chap. xix. 20. or the skin about his gums or lips: nothing was whole about him but his mouth to complain with. To have one such bile is very painful, but to have such angry, and noisome things all over the body, how exquisitely tormenting must it needs be?

\* The word for biles in this place is שחין which signifieth burning biles, from the Chal-dee שח to be bor.

They were inflaming Ulcers. But here is added also רע sore or malignant biles.

And in this sad plight *he sate down* (not on an easie Couch or soft Bed, but) *among the ashes*, v. 8. or upon a Dunghil without the city, as the *Septuagint* hath it \*: Where he had none to dress his Sores but himself, nor any thing (that we read of) to help himself with, but some piece of earthen Vessel cast on the Dunghill. Instead of using Oyls and Salves that were proper for the mitigation of his pain, and the healing his Sores, he scraped them, or squeezed out the raging matter of them, *with a possherd*. He was so changed by his blains and botches, and in so squalid a condition, that his *Friends knew him*

\* ἐν τῇ κορείᾳ ἔξω τῆς πόλεως.

him not, Chap. ii. 12. *His Brethren went far from him, and his acquaintance were estranged from him, his kinsfolk failed him, and his familiar friends forgot him; they that dwelt in his house, and his maids counted him for a stranger, he was an alien in their sight. He called his servant, and he gave him no answer, he intreated him with his mouth. His breath was strange to his wife, though he entreated for the Childrens sake of his body. The young Children despised him and spake against him: His inward friends abhorred him, and those whom he loved were turned against him: as he most pathetically complains, Chap. xix.*

Ch. xiii. 4.  
Ch. xvi. 2.

His three Friends, *Eliphaz, Bildad and Zophar*, when they first came to see him, sat down upon the ground seven days and nights, and could not speak for astonishment at so strange a spectacle; and what they afterwards spake was both impertinent and highly uncharitable: instead of giving him any relief, it added more to his grief, and aggravated his torment. *They were Physicians of no value, and miserable comforters, as Job told them.*

Ch. 2. 9.

And whereas he might have hoped that the Wife of his bosom, she to whom he had been so true and faithful, (Chap. xxxi. 9.) might have been some comfort to him, she on the contrary was not onely estranged from him, but also a disheartner of his patience, and assisted *Satan* in his designs against him. *Satan* had touched his bones and his flesh, but that speech of his Wife, *Dest thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God and die*, must needs smite him to the Heart.

And now have I not set before you a sad and most pitiable condition, full of such difficult circumstances

cumstances as might be apt, any one of them, to make the duty of quiet submission to the Will of God, very hard and grievous? For this rich and wealthy man to lose all his Estate, and that Estate which he had done so much good with, by acts of mercy and pity: and together with his Estate, all his ten Children by one sudden stroke: For this great and honourable Person to be brought so low as to sit upon an Ash-heap, to be debased to a Dunghil: For this so greatly revered and esteemed person, and that had been so humble in the height of his Honours, and employed his power for the relief of the oppressed, to be now the object of the greatest contempt, and vilified by the most vile: For so good a man, that feared God and eschewed evil, to be delivered up to the malice of the Devil, who would be sure not to spare him, but to lay on hard enough: for such a man, I say, to be thus lamentably afflicted both by men and devils, foes and *friends* too, and not to have so much as one comfort left him, who can sufficiently set forth the pitifulness of this case? The Scriptures mention *Job's* Wealth, Greatness, and Goodness, that the greatness of his sufferings, and his patient submission might the more appear.

For one that had but *little* before, to lose that; that was low before, to fall lower: is not so sharp a trial, as from possessing a great abundance, to be deprived of all, and that at once, to be immediately brought out of the extream of Prosperity into the extream of Adversity.

Had he by a riotous course, like the Prodigal in the Gospel, brought himself to streights; or had he by some hainous sin provoked the Almighty to inflict upon him some sore judgment, he had

had had no such trial of patience, but might thank himself for what was come upon him: But for one who had always kept a conscience void of offence both towards God and men, that walked in all the Commandments of God with a perfect and upright heart, to be so strangely and fearfully plagued, what a trial is here!

But Behold now *Job's* Resignation, and Submission to the Will of God, it was great to admiration, as great as his sufferings.

As soon as the last Messenger had delivered the heaviest tidings of all the four, (for they came, as was said, so thick one upon another, that he had not time to say any thing before, the latter coming while the former was yet speaking) I say the last had no sooner brought him the dismal news of all his ten Children being slain at once, but he put himself into the lowest and most humble posture, *rent his mantle, (or robe) shaved his head, and fell down on the ground and worshipped, and said: Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return \* thither; the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord.*

\* Namely  
to the  
womb of  
the earth,

to which 'tis like in uttering these words he pointed with his finger.

What more emphatical expression of an humble and profound submission to the Divine Will could have been uttered by the tongue of a man? *Naked came I out of my mothers womb, and naked shall I return thither: I have as much still as I brought into the world with me: For we brought nothing into this world, and it is certain we can carry nothing out,* 1 Tim. vi. 7. That which I have lost, it was not mine own, it was but lent me by God, who might call for it again whensoever he pleased:

pleased : I came into the world without it, and without it may I go again out of the world, and be never the less happy.

*The Lord gave* ; I acknowledge his goodness and favour in what I once enjoyed, and that I so long enjoyed it : *And the Lord hath taken away* ; I acknowledge and submit to the Lord's good pleasure in stripping me of all these comforts and enjoyments. He doth not say, *the Lord hath given, but the Sabeans and Chaldeans have taken away*, but he looks beyond men and all inferiour causes to God, and saith, *The Lord hath taken away*. The Seventy add here somewhat more, *ὡς τῷ κυρίῳ ἰδοῦν, ὅτις ἠθέλητο, as it pleaseth the Lord, so things come to pass.*

*Blessed be the name of the Lord* : To bless God when he bestoweth his blessings on us is very easie : It is no hard thing to say, *The Lord hath given, blessed be the name of the Lord* : But to bless God even when he hath taken away, and deprived us at once of all our comforts, this is hard indeed, this is heroick, this argues an excellent spirit, more than thousands of thanksgivings in a prosperous condition ; this is an admirable instance of *Self-Resignation*.

Not to murmur and repine at such exceedingly severe providences is a great expression of a *resigned* temper ; how great an evidence then is an heart born up in such miserable circumstances in a thankful and praising frame ?

And that *Job* should now bless God when *Satan* hoped and was so confident that he would *curse him to his face*, was a great foil and defeat Ch. i. 11. given to him, such a disappointment as could not but vex him at the very heart.

Nor is that other expression of Job's, Chap. ii. 10. unlike to this, namely his answer to that wretched speech of his wife's, *He said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh, What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? What? is God bound always to be heaping his favours upon us? Must we have nothing but Sun-shine, fair and calm days, without wind, or clouds or rain? Must we be fed with nothing but marrow and fatness, taste nothing but what is sweet and delicious, must we have all smooth and flowery way in our journey? And if he for a while cloud himself, if he stop the streams of his comforts that flowed so abundantly upon us, if he give us to taste of the sowre and bitter, the waters of Marah, must we therefore repine and complain, and think evil of him, and grow weary of his service? Having received so much good from him, is it not equitable and fit that we should bear some evil and hardship when he sends it? Should not the memory of the many and long continued mercies more sweeten and endear our good God to us, than some present crosses and adversities imbitter our thoughts of him, and sowre our spirits with discontent?*

Oh the height and excellency of Grace in this holy man! He was *Vir ante Evangelia Evangelicus*: A person of the true Evangelical and Christian spirit before Christ or his Gospel came into the world. How had patience its perfect work in him! There could not be a braver spectacle, a more lovely sight on the whole earth for God and Angels to behold, than such a Soul in the midst of such trials; the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit being in the sight of God πολυτελής of great price. If Seneca could say of Cato, \* Behold a sight which that God who diligently observes the

\* Ecce speculaculum ad quod respiciat operi suo intentus Deus.

*work of his own hands may fix his eye upon, well may it be said of holy Job.*

This honourable *Elogium* is given of him Chap. 2. 10. *In all this Job sinned not with his lips:* And the like in Chap. i. 22. where it is added, *nor charged God foolishly.* He did not speak unworthily of God or his disposals, nor had he any disbecoming thoughts of him or them: Nay, he was so far from repining and fretting at the severest of them, that, as was said, he took them gratefully at his hands.

As deformed and diseased a Creature as Job was, as to his outward man, he was most sound, fair and lovely within: Though his Body lay among the *ashes* and *possheds*, yet was he as to the inward Constitution of his Soul as the *wings of a Dove*, beautified with such interchangeable colours, by the Sun shining upon her, that they are as it were covered with *silver*, and her feathers with *yellow gold*.

Pf. lxxviii.  
13.

In the Song of *Hannah* it is said, that *God raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghil:* But here we have a far greater wonder, God exalted Job even when he debased him to the dust, and made him in his lowest estate a glorious person; more glorious to all ages than ever he would have been, had there been nothing in his story, but that he was for his Wealth and Honour the greatest of all the men of the East. So that Job even whilst he was of this low degree, might rejoyce in that he was exalted, to allude to that of *S. James. ch. 1. 9.*

Great afflictions accompanied with an unconquerable patience canonize men, and advance them to a peculiar degree of honour and glory above the rest of mankind. *Behold we count them*

happy that endure, μακαρίζομεν, we call them blessed, James v. 11.

St. Chrysostom thus magnificently speaks of Job's κοπρία, his *Dunghill*, that it was πάντος θρόνου βασιλικῷ σεμνότερα, more stately than any *Kingly Throne*: And of his τραύματα, his *Sores*, that they were πάντων λίθων τιμώτερα, richer than any jewels and precious stones; nay, that they were τῶν ἡλιακῶν ἀκτίνων φαιδρότερα, more splendid and glorious than the very *Sun-beams*: And again, ἰδὲ γὰρ ἔτω λαμπρὸς ἐπὶ θρόνῳ καθήμενος βασιλεὺς ὡς ἱκέτιος ἐπὶ τῆς κοπρίας τότε καθήμενος ἐπίσημος ἦν καὶ περίφανος, that no King sitting upon his *Throne* is so illustrious, as was Job then upon the *Dunghill*, honourable and glorious.

That very Ash-heap or *Dunghill* where the illustrious debased Job sate was a Throne of glory, no Royal Seat of Majesty or Chair of State was so glorious; here his patience was enthroned, here the humble Greatness and Majesty of his mind shined forth, and the Spirit of Glory rested on him.

What a pleasure was it to Heaven to see this Champion come off so bravely, and to baffle all the attempts and arts that the Devil could use to break his spirit, and force him to impatience and unworthy reflections upon God and his Providence!

God said twice to Satan: Hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in all the earth? הֲשָׁמַח לְךָ? Hast thou set thine heart upon my servant Job? Hast thou taken special notice of him? God seemeth to glory and make his boast of this excellent person, as a more worthy sight than any that presented it self to the view

view of observation in any part of the World. But he was much more worthy of esteem and admiration after he had been proved by such sore trials: when *the trial of his faith and patience was found unto praise and honour and glory.* So great was his Patience, so exemplary his *Resignation*, that the holy Scripture sets a special mark both upon it and him. Upon it James 5. 11. *Ye have heard of the patience of Job: upon him,* in that he is mentioned as one of God's three most peculiar Favourites, *Ezech. 14.*

And now, having given some account of his woful afflictions and his great patience under them, we will speak briefly of the reward this his submission and *Resignation* of himself to the Will of God, was at last crowned with. After the Apostle had said, in the forementioned place, *Ye have heard of the patience of Job*, it follows, *and have seen the end of the Lord, that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy.* And in the 42. Chapter of *Job* we find him most amply rewarded even in *this* life. In the seventh and eighth verses we read that he found such special favour in the eyes of God, that his three friends, who had added to the heavy weight of his afflictions, and had not spoken of God that which was right as *Job* had done, could not atone his anger with a Burnt-offering without *Job's* intercession in their behalf. And in the tenth verse it is said, that *the Lord turned the captivity of Job, when he prayed for his friends; also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before.* And in the twelfth verse, that *the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand Sheep, and six thousand Camels, and a thousand yoke of Oxen, and a thousand She-afes:*

whereas he had before but half this number of each of these, as hath been shewn.

Thus in his Goods and Possessions which were either destroyed by fire, or carried away by his thievish Neighbours the *Sabeans* and *Chaldeans*, and so were never to be enjoyed by him more, God gave him (in these) double: But as to his Children he gave him the just number he had before, viz. *seven sons and three daughters*, v. 13. These it is likely were not doubled, because though they were taken away by death, yet they were not utterly lost, but their spirits returned to God that gave them, they were still alive with God, where their Father should again meet them in the other life.

But there is this said concerning these new daughters of *Job* which was not said of the former, that *in all the land were no women found so fair as they*, ver. 15. And lastly we read in ver. 16. that *after this lived Job an hundred and forty years, and saw his sons, and his sons sons, even four generations*. After which, the happy days he enjoyed here concluded in an unspeakably more happy Eternity.

And thus, as *Satan* said, *Doth Job serve God for nought?* so we see that his great Patience and exemplary Submission to the Will of God under the forest and severest trials, was not *in vain in the Lord*, but abundantly recompenced.

But before I conclude this Example of *Resignation*, I must take notice that so great was *Job's* Patience, that some of the *Rabbins* of old, and some of late, have imagined the account that we have of him to be rather a moral fiction, a Romance and Parable, than a real History. So very averse are men to think any higher degrees of good-

goodness attainable than what they themselves are willing to come up to.

But that we may not doubt whether it were a true History, besides other arguments, that in *Ezech. xiv. 14, 20.* doth evidently prove it so to be. There it is twice said, *Though these three men, Noah, Daniel and Job were in it, they should but deliver their own souls by their righteousness*: intimating, that if there were any hope or help for a Nation, none were more likely to prevail than these three persons, most dear to God for their singular Piety.

A like expression there is, *Jer. xv. 1. Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be to this people.* Now Noah and Daniel, Moses and Samuel being no imaginary but real persons, why should it be thought that Job onely was so?

Let it be farther considered, that in *Jam. 5. 10, 11.* we are directed to the *Prophets* and to *Job* as examples of Patience. Now the Prophets being no fictions, but such as really spake in the name of the Lord, how should Job come to be joyn'd with them, if there were never such a one in being? Surely we are not exhorted to the imitation of one who never was, nor encouraged to a *real* duty by an *imaginary* and *feigned* reward.

If this Story were a mere fiction, the argument to patience which St. James useth in those words, *Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord, &c.* might have been thus excepted against by those suffering Christians to whom he there speaketh, viz. *What do you tell us of one Job, of his patience and reward, there was never such a person, there were never such things practised as are said of him, and therefore how can what you have told us concerning him signifie any thing to our encouragement?*

## C H A P. X.

## Of the Example of ELI.

X. **A** Third Example shall be that of *Eli*. He was both the High-Priest and Judge, the chief of both Capacities, Sacred and Civil, and judged *Israel* forty years: But being greatly faulty in not using his power to the restraining his two sons *Hophni* and *Phinehas*, that rendred the Service of God and the Priesthood vile, by their Covetousness, Luxury, and Uncleaness, God sent *Samuel* with this sad message to him, namely, that *he would judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knew of*, but did not restrain by his authority: That *his two sons should die on one day*; that the dignity of the Priesthood should be taken from his Family, and given to another.

This sentence, though most righteous, was so severe, that it is said that *both the ears of every one*, that heard of the execution of it, *should tingle*, 1 Sam. iii. 11. And it was an irreversible sentence; for God saith, that *he hath sworn unto the house of Eli, that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice, nor offering for ever*, ver. 14. A dreadful expression of his great displeasure.

And now how was *Eli* affected with this message? His Resignation of himself, and free Submission to the Will of God is exprest, ver. 18. in that speech of his, *It is the Lord: Let him do what seemeth him good: or, what is good in his eyes. Let him do, not what I, but what he thinks best, who is both infinitely wise and just, and knoweth better than I how to dispose of all for his own glory. He is holy in all his ways, and therefore 'tis fit his will should take place.*

His

His heart did not fret against the Lord, nor was he cut to the heart when this sad cutting message was brought him, which was no less than the cutting off his arm, and the arm of his fathers house: As it is exprest, Chap. ii. 31. And he gave proof of it: for when he heard that his two sons were slain in Battel, (which was the sign God gave of the approaching ruine of his house, Chap. ii. 34.) he seemed to bear this unconcernedly in comparison of the following tidings.

For when he heard that the *Ark of God* was taken, that sad word strikes him backward, and made him sink down in a deadly swoond: Then he fell off from his Seat, and brake his neck with the fall, Chap. iv. 18. The good old man was so resigned to the Will of God as to his own concerns, that he could patiently bear the departure of the glory of his house, but the *departure of the Glory from Israel*, of the *Ark*, which was the token of God's special favour and residence among them, this he could not bear.

## C H A P. XI.

*Of the Example of DAVID.*

XI. **T**HE fourth Example I shall propose of *Self-Resignation* is holy *David*, a man after God's own heart, that would fulfil πάντα τὰ θελήματα, all his wills, as it is *Acts* xiii. 22. He was eminent for obedience to the Divine Commands; he delighted to do the will of God, yea his law was within his heart, *Psal.* xl. 11. And had respect unto all his Commandments, *Psal.* cxix. 6. And he was likewise eminent for a patient sub-

submissive temper under great trials and sufferings.

That was an exceeding great trial, when with his household and loyal Subjects, he was forced to fly with all speed out of *Jerusalem*, for the saving his life from the bloody machinations of his own Son *Absolom*. We have the story in 2 *Sam.* 15, & 16. Chapters. *Absolom*, his third son by birth, but now his eldest, and therefore Heir apparent to the Crown, being impatient to stay for it till the natural death of his Father, designed first by flattering civilities to insinuate himself into the hearts of the people, and afterwards by armed power to force his way into his Throne.

For his person, he was of a very lovely aspect and taking presence, *so that in all Israel there was none to be so much praised as Absolom for his beauty; from the sole of his foot even to the crown of his head there was no blemish in him.*

Ch. xiv. 25. He had also a fair and smooth tongue, was of a winning and insinuating behaviour, so that he stole away the hearts of the men of *Israel*. And having so done it was an easie business to get himself chosen and proclaimed King, which was done by the men of *Israel*, and that in *Hebron* too, the very place where his Father was first anointed by the men of *Judah*, and seven years and an half after by the Tribes of *Israel*.

Ch. xv. 2,  
3, 4, 5.  
v. 6, 13.

Ch. xv. 10.

And now *Absolom* endeavours to confirm himself in his usurped dominion by the best arts of power and policy he could imagine. He gains *Achitophel* to be of his side, who was the King's Counsellor, a man of that venerable esteem for his great Wisdom, that his Counsel is said to be, *as if a man had enquired at the Oracle of God.* Ch.

xvi. 23.

He

He is busie in preparing a great Army against his Father ; the Conspiracy was strong, and the people increased continually with *Abolom*, which made him cry out, as he did, in the third Psalm, ver. 1, 2. (a Psalm penned upon this occasion) *Lord, how are they increased that trouble me? many are they that rise up against me, many there be which say of my soul, there is no help for him in God.* And that these many were not the ἀλλόφυλοι, *Philistines, Moabites, Amalakites, Amonites*, and other Heathens, but his own Subjects, was a more afflicting trouble. And that among these should be found *Achitophel*, his Friend and Counsellor, that his head and hand should be in all this, this made it more afflicting still, as he complaineth, 55. 12. *It was not an enemy that reproached me, then I could have born it: Neither was it he that hated me, that did magnifie himself against me, then would I have hid my self from him. But it was thou, a man, mine equal, my guide and my acquaintance: we took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company.*

And that the *General*, he that headed the Army against him should be *Amasa*, the son of his sister *Abigail*, and therefore so near to him, as that *David* saith of him, *that he was bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh*; this was another aggravation of his affliction.

2 Sam. xix.  
13.

And lastly, This made the affliction most sharp of all, that he that was at the head of all, that animated this rebellious body should be *Abolom*. That the Son should thirst after the Father's blood, that he which came forth of his bowels should seek his life, as he complains Chap. xvi.

11. And that he should be the son whom he loved most passionately, even so passionately, that after his

ὁ υἱὸς τοῦ  
πατρὸς.

his three years absence from Court, it is said Chap. xiii. 39. That *the soul of David longed (נִחְלָד) was consumed* to go forth unto Absalom. And then, all this to befall him in his old age too, and after he had by his valour and prudent conduct saved his people out of the hands of their enemies.

Put all these sad circumstances together, and was not *David* in sore troubles and trials? But how doth he behave and acquit himself herein? Doth he quarrel with Providence, and the instruments of his trouble? Nothing less: But his disposition and carriage was all composed of meekness and submission to the Will of God.

Being sensible of the eminent danger he was in, he prudently provides for his security by removing from *Jerusalem*, which he and his servants did with all speed, lest *Absalom* should suddenly over-take them, and thrust (or push) evil upon them, as the word is: For his enemies were most quick and active in their preparations against him: which therefore he calls the stormy wind and tempest, Psal. lv. 8. Of his hasty fleeing he speaks, Psal. lv. 6, 7. (which refers to this occasion, as appears by ver. 14.) where he cries: *O that I had wings like a dove; for then would I flee away and be at rest: Lo then would I wander far off, and remain in the wilderness. Selah. I would hasten my escape from the windy storm and tempest.*

Being gotten out of the City in haste, he and his Guard, they tarry in a place that was far off (v. 17.) to refresh themselves; not knowing whither to go, or where to be at rest, (as he then told *Ittai the Gittite*, who was come to him resolving to fare as he did) v. 20.

Having

Having made a little pause, here he passeth over the Brook *Kidron*, ver. 23. (a Brook between the City and Mount *Olivet*) the Countrey weeping with a loud voice at this sad Procession: As also when they were going up Mount *Olivet*, *they went weeping as they went up, every one covering his head*, after the manner of mourners, ver. 30. And in the midst of these hardships and sorrowful sympathizings of the people, which could not but much affect his heart, (having given order to *Zadok* the Priest to return back to the City with the Ark of God, which thus far accompanied him, desiring that that Monument of God's Glory and Presence might not wander up and down with him in his desolate condition, but be placed again in the City of God) he thus expresth the humble and quiet resignation of his spirit, Ch. xv. 25, 26. *If I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and shew me both it (the Ark) and his habitation, (Jerusalem the City of the great King) but if he thus say, I have no delight in thee, behold here am I, let him do unto me as seemeth good unto him.*

*Though I be brought to excessive straits, though I be deprived of all my glory in this my old age, after all the good services I have done for Israel and Judah, yet here am I, let him do as seemeth good to him, not as seemeth good to me. Thy will, O Lord, shall be my will, thy pleasure I will rest satisfied with and acquiesce in. Thou shalt chuse for me, and to thy choice will I accommodate my self. Be it so as thou wouldest have it to be, O thou most holy and wise, and the Lord of all, who dost whatsoever pleaseth thee both in heaven and earth. My heart is ready, O God, my heart is ready, it is fixed and resolved to drink of that Cup which thou hast appointed me.*

And

V. 30.

And his humble disposition of Soul discovered it self immediately after in his penitential behaviour (already mentioned) as he went up the Mount. *He wept as he went up, and had his head covered, and he went barefoot*, which were the most significant expressions of a great humiliation and submissness of spirit.

And this meek frame of Soul in reference to God's disposals did dispose him to a rare meekness and patience in reference to men.

Ch. xvi.  
7, 8.

There happened a little after he was past Mount Olivet a very provoking occasion: For Shimei a Benjamite threw stones at him and his men, and cast dust at them all along in the way, and added to this indignity curses and revilings of the person of the King. Abishai, one of his three chief Commanders, was so incensed at the horrid insolence of this *dead dog*, as he called Shimei, that he prays the King that he might go over to him and take off his head. But David was so far from permitting this, that he was more offended at Abishai's Zeal for him, than at Shimei's injuries, and thus replies to him: *What have I to do with you ye sons of Zeruiah? so let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David, (that is, because the Lord saw it good to permit him to curse me for my punishment) who then shall say, Wherefore hast thou done so? Again, Behold, (saith he) my son which came forth of my bowels seeketh my life: how much more now may this Benjamite do it? Let him alone, and let him curse: for the Lord hath bidden him.*

David was not a person of a dull phlegmatick temper, of a slow and stupid disposition, but of a vigorous active spirit; he was sensible what a barba-

barbarous act this was in *Shimei* thus to insult over his King, and that in his great distress; but being also sensible of God's Providence in permitting this wretched man thus to affront, revile and curse him, to correct him for his sins, he quietly and meekly submitted to it.

And *David* lost nothing by his humble submission; for God delivered him from the policies of *Achitophel*, from the powerful Army of *Absolom*, and brought him back with joy and triumph to *Jerusalem*.

And as for *Shimei*, God returned his wickedness upon his own head, and *David* found that true, which he did but modestly suppose upon *Shimei's* cursing: *It may be* (saith he) *the Lord* Ver. 12. *will look upon mine affliction, and that the Lord will requite good for his cursing this day.* And he that spake with such an humble resigned mind, *But if he say, I have no delight in thee, behold here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good to him,* found that God did delight in him, and therefore delivered him: As he himself expresseth it, Psalm xviii. 19. *He delivered me because he delighted in me.* God did what seemed good to *David*, seeing he was willing he should do what seemed good to himself.

I will add one more passage expressive of *David's* Resignation: It is in Psal. xxxix. The particular occasion is not mentioned, but that he was in a most afflicted condition we find in the tenth verse: *Remove thy stroke away from me, I am consumed by the blow of thine hand:* And v. 13. he prayeth, *that God would spare him that he might recover strength.* But yet he was patient, submissive and quiet, ver. 9. *I was dumb, I opened not my mouth, because thou didst it:* As in another

nother case he saith, *Surely I have behaved and quieted my self as a child that is weaned of his mother: my soul is even as a weaned child*, Psal. cxxxi. 2.

See how this great man expresseth himself in words of greatest lowliness and humility. When he has to do with God, he is as a *little child*, a poor, low, contemptible thing in his own esteem; as a *worm and no man*, as he speaks, Psal. xxii. 6. Though when he had to do with *men*, and was to fight the Lord's Battels, who more a man than *David*? Who more courageous and stout-hearted? When he was but a stripling, he encountred and slew a Lion and a Bear, and the great Giant *Goliath*.

Now if *David* a King, one of such heighth and dignity, one of so great fame and renown in the world, one of such incomparable courage and magnanimity, did with such meekness and subjection of Soul submit to the Divine Providence, and in such instances as these, wherein as a *King* and as a *Father* he was most highly provoked and unworthily dealt with: is it not a shame for us, who are so much his inferiours, to be impatient and unresigned, and that in far less trials than his were.

## CHAP. XII.

### *Of the Example of our BLESSED SAVIOUR.*

XII. **O**ur fifth Example of Holy Resignation is our Lord Jesus Christ: Of all Examples the greatest: the brightest and fairest Pattern

Pattern of all: for none ever obeyed, none ever suffered so much as the holy and blessed Jesus, and *through sufferings was this Captain of our Salvation made perfect*, Heb. ii. 10.

He is the Ἀρχηγός, the *Captain* and brave Leader of the noble Army of Martyrs, as all *self-resigning* Souls are: For to give their *body of Sin*, and Self-desires to be burnt, their own Wills to be consumed by the flames of Divine Love, what is it less than Martyrdom?

And I chuse to mention our Saviour next to *David*, (though he was indeed far before him in Obedience and Submission) because he is the *Spiritual David*, and called by the name *David* by the Prophets, (*David* being an Historical Type and Figure of Christ both in his Troubles and Triumphs, and therefore the second Psalm is applicable both to *David* and Christ) and because there are some memorable conformities between them as to this particular of Resignation.

1. Christ had his *Judas*, as *David* his *Achitophel*: one near to him, and that *did eat at his table*, conspired and *lift up the heel against him*.

2. *Israel*, whom God calls his *Son*, dealt as unworthily with Christ as *Abalom* did with *David*.

3. *David* (as we have shewn) being conspired against, goeth with his servants out of *Jerusalem*, passeth over the Brook *Kidron*, goes up by the ascent of Mount *Oliver*, he weeps as he went, *his heart was sore pained within him*, the *storms of death were fallen upon him*, and *horror over-whelmed him*: as he complained upon this occasion, Psalm lv. 2, 4, 5. And now it was that he exprest his humble Resignation to the

Will of God in those words: *Behold here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him.*

And this *Spiritual David*, beginning to undergo his last and greatest Sufferings, goes out of *Jerusalem*, where his enemies were conspiring to destroy him, and *Judas* helping to facilitate their cruel enterprize. He, with his Disciples, passeth over the *Brook Cedron*, (the same with *Kidron*) *John xviii. 1.* he comes to the *Mount of Olives*, (the same with *Mount Olivet*) *Matth. xxvi. 30.* and in a Garden there, *he began to be sorrowful and sore amazed, and very heavy*: Told his three Disciples that *his Soul was exceeding sorrowful even unto death.* Here he wept, *he offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears*: And, being in an *Agony*, sweat as it were drops of blood. And here he exprest his humble *Resignation* to the Will of his Father in these words: *O my Father, if this Cup may not pass away from me except I drink it, thy will be done,* *Matth. xxvi. 14.* Or as it is in *St. Luke*: *Father, if thou be willing, remove this Cup from me, nevertheless not my will, but thine be done.* And those words whereby *David* expresth his *Resignation*, *Psal. xl. 7, 8.* we find applied unto *Christ*, *Heb. x. 7.* *Lo I come, in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God.* And in him were they verified in a far more eminent degree.

There was no compare between *David's Resignation* and our Saviour's, his Cup was much more bitter, his Sufferings were not such as are common to men, but were of an extraordinary nature, being designed for an extraordinary end, viz. The making atonement and expiation for the sins of the World. *He bare our sins in his*

Mat. xxvi.  
37.  
Ver. 38.  
Heb. v. 7.

*own body on the tree; was wounded for our iniquities, bruised for our sins.* And he was a Person far from deserving the least of sufferings by any the least default: For he was spotlessly innocent, and ever lived in most perfect Obedience to the Will of God.

Yet notwithstanding the unspeakable greatness of his Sufferings, and his non-desert of them, he did not in the least complain of his Father for giving him up to them, but intirely submitted to, and acquiesced in his will and pleasure. *The Cup that my Father gives me to drink, (saith he) shall I not drink it? Not as I will, but as thou wilt.*

And the *Resignation* of his Soul was also expressed by the most wonderful Meekness and Charity he discovered towards his bloody Enemies, even in the midst of their unsufferable abuses and barbarous cruelties. *He was led as a Lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep dumb before the shearers, he opened not his mouth.* Wherein also *David* was a Type of our Saviour, viz. in his behaviour towards the reviling *Shimei* already mentioned.

But the *Resignation* of our Blessed Saviour (which was of all others incomparably the greatest) I shall not farther enlarge on, because I have discoursed already of it, and shall have yet farther occasion to speak more in another Chapter; I will onely add, that this is the Copy we are to eye most, though we are compassed about with a *great cloud* of other Witnesses, and noble Examples of this Vertue.

## C H A P. XIII.

*Of the Example of the Apostle Saint PAUL.*

XIII. **T**He sixth and last Example I shall mention is Blessed *Paul*: A follower of *Christ*, as he styles himself, 1 *Cor.* xi. 1. And he imitated him in nothing more than in *Self-Resignation*.

The very first words he spake at his Conversion did speak the great preparedness of his Soul for this Grace: *Lord*, said he, *what wilt thou have me to do?* *Acts* ix. 6. There then shone round about him a light from Heaven above the brightness of the Sun, but a more glorious light shined into his heart; and as that light struck his *Body* down to the earth, so did this his *Soul*, and humbled it to the lowest degree of Self-abasement and submissive compliance with the Will of God.

*Lord*, *what wilt thou have me to do?* was as well the language of his heart, as the voice of his lips. And whatsoever the Will of God was that he should either do or suffer afterward, he was most pliable and yielding to it. He would will or act nothing but according to the Will of *Christ*. *To him to live was Christ*, *Phil.* i. 21. His own proper will was swallowed up in his will, so that he did not so much live as *Christ* lived in him, *Gal.* ii. 20.

None of the holy Writers spake more frequently or vigorously than *St. Paul* of the necessity of our being crucified to the world, and of having the world crucified unto us, of crucifying the flesh with the affections and lusts, of mortifying through the Spirit the deeds of the body, as being the

the only way to eternal life, of putting off the old man which is corrupt according to deceitful lusts: By all which expressions is meant the subduing our own will and every inordinate affection, whatsoever is contrary to the Will of God and opposite to *Self-Resignation*.

These things this excellent Apostle doth inculcate and press with all seriousness, and in expressions of greater significancy, of a more spiritual force and fuller energy than any forms of speech that occur in the *Old Testament*.

And what he thus teacheth and exhorts to, he was an eminent Example of the Practice of. He himself *was crucified with Christ; he suffered the loss of all things, and accounted all other gains and advantages but loss and dung that he might win Christ, that he might know the power of Christ's resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death*, Phil. iii. 8, 10. Gal. ii. 20.

He professed that it is most reasonable and becoming us, that if Christ died for us we should live to him and not to our selves, or the pleasing our own wills, and that the *Love of Christ* doth with a sweet force constrain hereunto; and that the *mercies of God* do powerfully engage us to make an entire oblation of our selves to him, which is our reasonable service. Rom. xii. 1.

And (I say) his practice and behaviour was fully agreeable to these his professions. At his first Conversion God shewed him how great things he must suffer for his names sake, but the hardships he was to endure did not at all startle him. The Holy Ghost witnessed in every City, that bonds and afflictions did await him, but saith he, *none of these things trouble me, nor count I my life dear unto my self, (and what is dearer than life?)* Acts ix. 16.

so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the Gospel of the grace of God, Acts xx. 24. And therefore he went to Jerusalem, (where he was to expect very great afflictions) δεδεμένος πνεύματι, bound in Spirit, constrained by a holy violence, ver. 22.

Nor could he be perswaded by those Disciples at Tyre that, by revelation from the Spirit, told him that he would incur much hazard by going up to Jerusalem, and therefore advised him not to go: Nor was he wrought upon by those other Disciples who endeavoured by their tears, added to their earnest intreaties, to stay him: But his answer to them was, *What mean you to weep, and to break mine heart, for I am ready, not to be bound only, but also to die at Jerusalem, for the name of the Lord Jesus, Acts xxi. 13.* And by the steadfast purpose of his Soul to be resigned to the Will of God herein, did he at last win them over to the same Resignation, ver. 14. *And when he would not be perswaded we ceased, saying, The will of the Lord be done.*

And what severe trials he was exercised with, how many and great things he suffered, we have an account in 1 Cor. iv. 11. &c. 2 Cor. vi. 4, 5. and Chap. xi. 23, &c. in which place are mentioned together above twenty instances of his sufferings.

So far was he from living a self-pleasing life, that, if he pleased himself in any thing, it was in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake, Ch. xii. 10.

So far was he from impatience and shrinking at those disposals of Providence, that he rejoiced in his sufferings, while he filled up that which was behind

*behind of the sufferings of Christ in his flesh, for his bodies sake which is the Church, Col. i. 24.*

But there is one passage in St. Paul's Writings which I had chiefly in mine eye when I thought him, next to our blessed Saviour, most worthy to be presented as a Pattern for Christians to follow: And it is a passage which expresseth the great progress he had made in *Self-Resignation* both as to the *active* and *passive* part of it: Both as it consists in a free and entire obedience to difficult commands, and in patient bearing hard trials and sufferings.

The passage is that in *Phil. iv. 11, 12, 13.* *I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content. I know both how to be abased, and I know how to abound, every where and in all things, I am instructed both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need. I can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth me.*

Of which words I may say as *Ansonius* of the Emperor's words, *O mentis aureæ verba bracteata!* *O plated (or rich and most excellent) words, expressing a golden (or most beautiful and goodly) mind.* Yea, such is the preciousness of this Wisdom, to know how to be either abased or to abound, to have learned in every condition to be content, that it is not to be valued with pure gold, with the precious *Onyx* or the *Sapphire*, the price of it is above *Rubies*.

To know how to abound and to be full, and not deny God, not to forget and forsake him in fulness, not to be high-minded and trust in uncertain riches, not to make the abundance of these outward things to administer to pride and haughtiness, luxury and sensuality; but on the contrary, to be humble, to trust in God, and acknowledge

him in all his Gifts, to be moderate in abundance, and strictly religious, this is no easie thing, 'tis a lesson that few will learn, but St. Paul had learnt it.

To know how to be abased, how to want, and to be kept short, to look upon others full portions in this life without Covetousness or envying what they have, to bear adversity, to endure afflictions, losses and difficulties of all sorts without impatience and murmuring at the allotment of Providence, to be quiet and meek, and much more, to be chearful and rejoyce under all; not to love God the less, nor trust in him the less, nor to flag or be discouraged by this means in his service; this is also a difficult and uneasie lesson, but holy Paul was likewise herein instructed.

Καυχόμεθα, *We glory in tribulations*, saith this great Apostle, *Rom. v. 3.* Glorifying is not mere joy, but joy exalted to its utmost height. And what a full expression is that he useth, *2 Cor. vii. 4.* ὑπερπερισσεύουσι τῇ χαρᾷ, *I do more than abound with joy in all tribulation: or, I rejoyce with a superlative joy.* What a mighty Proficient was this blessed person in the School of Christ! Yea, he farther saith, that he could *do all things through Christ strengthening him*: And he had learned to be content, not onely in some conditions, but in *whatsoever state*: He knew how to be abased, and how to want not onely in some circumstances, but *every where and in all things*. Here was the power of Godliness indeed, and *the Kingdom of God not in word but in power*. And after all this he ascribes nothing to himself, but gives Christ the glory of all. *He was* (he saith) *able to do all this through Christ strengthening him*; through the

the power of his grace, which was sufficient for him.

This is somewhat of the much more that might be observed concerning this blessed Apostle, who, in resignation and submission to the Will of God, was one of the best Copies, and nearest the Original, that ever was drawn by the finger of God, the Holy Spirit: And, next to the Life of *Christ* (the fairest picture of Purity and Holiness represented by the four Evangelists) the life of *Paul* is set forth at large; above one half of the *Acts of the Apostles* being spent in his Character. Nor was it out of any vain-glorious design, nor from any undue love or valuation of himself, that he intreated others *to be followers of him, as he was of Christ*, but from the inward sense of the great sweetness, peace and comfort, and the many advantages he found in the imitation of him, and from the absolute necessity of this Duty. And these great reasons induced him to propound himself as a pattern particularly to the *Corinthians*, 1. *Cor.* xi. 1. Chap. iv. 16. to the *Thessalonians*, 2 *Thess.* iii. 7, 9. and to the *Philippians*, Ch. iii. 17. and Chap. iv. 9. *Those things which ye have both learned and received, and heard and seen in me, do, and the God of peace shall be with you.*

Now then, O feeble and faint-hearted Christian, take heart and courage from these great Examples, up and be doing, be strong in the Lord and in the power of his might. Wait upon God, and apply thy self heartily to him, that thou mayest be clothed with the same Spirit, and indued with power from on high. And as *Elisha* said of old: *Where is the Lord God of Elijah?* <sup>2 Kings</sup>  
So rouse up thy self and say, *Where is the God* <sup>ii. 14.</sup>  
of

Heb. xiii.  
8.

of Paul, the God of Abraham, Job, David, and the rest? The same God who wrought effectually in these to such an exemplary *Resignation*, will be mighty in thee also, if thou hast the same *Spirit of faith*, the same sincerity and singleness of heart. *He that is mighty will magnifie thee*, will do great things for thee and in thee. *Jesus Christ, the same yesterday and to day and for ever*; what he was to St. Paul and others like him heretofore, he will be unto thee to day, and to all believing Souls for ever; such as walk in the same Spirit, and in the same steps.

Isa. xl. 28.

*Hast thou not known, hast thou not heard that the everlasting God fainteth not, neither is weary? Nor hath he forgotten to be gracious; but his tender mercies are the same, and the arm of his strength the same. The same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him, Rom. x. 2.*

Isa. li. 9.

Onely take heed of being wearied and fainting in your minds, but *wait on the Lord, and he shall strengthen your heart, wait I say on the Lord.* You shall then be enabled to run the race that is set before you with patience; though a long and an hard race, you shall run it and not be weary, you shall walk in the most difficult paths of obedience, and not faint. *The arm of the Lord shall awake as in the ancient days, in the generations of old: As it did in the days of the forementioned Worthies: And you shall be strengthened, as they were, with all might according to his glorious power, unto all patience and long-suffering, and that with joyfulness.*

Col. i. 11.

## C H A P. XIV.

*That the consideration of Christ crucified is a very effectual means for the crucifying of the old man.*

XIV. **N**inthly, Let thy mind dwell much upon the meditation of Christ crucified. Bring thy Self-will and inordinate affections to Mount *Calvary*, and there nail them to the Cross of Christ. As Christ *blotted out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, and contrary to us, viz. the Jewish Law, the Mosaical Rites, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his Cross*; so should a Christian do with the *law in his members, or the law of sin and death*. The nailing it to the Cross of Christ is a most effectual means to take it out of the way.

The Cross of Christ, I say, is a proper instrument for the crucifying the old man, and the body of sin, and the consideration of Christ crucified a powerful Engine, *mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds*, to the beating down of all those fortifications sin hath raised in the Soul, *all imaginations, all carnal reasonings and affections, every high thing that would exalt it self against the knowledge of God, and the obedience of Christ*.

St. Paul speaks his own experience of the success he found in the serious consideration of Christ crucified; Gal. vi. 14. *God forbid that I should glory save in the Cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, whereby the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world*. That is, the vanities and hurtful allurements of the world, whether they be those  
of

of its riches, honours or pleasures, are become liveless and untempting to me, have no energy or force to perswade me to an eager pursuit or fond embracement of them; I am so little affected towards them, so mortified to them, as to place no part of my happiness in such things.

Now then the meditation on Christ crucified is a means greatly available to the subduing our Self-will, and irregular appetites, in that

1. *His dying on the Cross, as the Scripture declares that it was to make atonement and expiation for sin, so it affirms that it was also designed to root out and destroy it.* This is asserted in many Texts.

Particularly in 1 Pet. ii. 24. *Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we being dead to sin, should live unto righteousness, by whose stripes ye were healed.*

2 Cor. v. 14, 15. *For the Love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge: that if one died for all, then were all dead: And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live to themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.*

1 Pet. i. 18, 19. *Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation, &c. but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot.*

Gal. i. 4. *Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father.*

Titus ii. 14. *Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purifie to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.*

Rom. viii. 3. 4. *For what the Law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his*

*his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin condemned sin in the flesh : That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit.*

2. *Christ's dying on the Cross was designed to be an exemplary pattern of our crucifying the body of sin.* As his Resurrection is a figure of the Spiritual Resurrection of Christians, their rising up to a life holy, heavenly and divine ; so his Death on the Cross is a figure and representation of that Spiritual Death that is to pass upon the old man.

And because this is a necessary important truth, as well as pertinent to the point in hand, I shall observe three passages of Scripture to this purpose, and a little descant upon them.

First, that in 1 Pet. iv. 1. *Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind : for he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin.*

The *suffering in the flesh* which the Apostle here tells us we are to imitate our Saviour in, is not to be merely understood of suffering afflictions in the body, but of resembling the suffering and dying of Christ, in dying unto sin. This appears from what next follows, *he that hath suffered in the flesh hath ceased from sin* Some Greek Copies leave out the Particle *in*, and read *ὁ παθὼν σαρκί*, he that hath suffered or died to the flesh : the same with that phrase, Rom. vi. 2. *dead to sin.* He that hath suffered or died to the flesh, or he that hath suffered pain and smart in the flesh, in the mortifying of his sinful life, and the deeds of the body, *hath ceased from sin*, as he that is dead ceaseth from the actions that belong to the natural life.

This also appears from Ver. 2. That *he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh, to the lusts of men, but to the will of God*; not live any longer in the gratification of those fleshly appetites that captivate and enslave the greater part of mankind; but on the contrary live a life of entire obedience and conformity to the Will of God.

A second passage to the like purpose is that in *Philippians iii. 10. That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death*: Which last words are a key to the foregoing; and this conformity to the death of Christ implies that it hath in it something of Pattern and exemplary Consideration, to be spiritually resembled and imitated by a Christian.

There is a knowing of the power of Christ's Resurrection and Sufferings *without* us, as they refer to God the Father, in purchasing his favour, procuring the Pardon of our sins, and Reconciliation with him: For Christ was *delivered* (to death) *for our offences, and rose again for our justification*, Rom. iv. 5. And besides there is the knowing of the power of Christ's Death and Resurrection *within* us, there is something to be done and transacted in us that is answerable and bears conformity thereto. There is a *κοινωνία παθμάτων*, a partaking of his Sufferings in a spiritual sense; when we are enabled by the power of God to suffer the pain and agonies that accompany the crucifying of the flesh or body of sin, and to die *unto sin* as he died for it. And there is a partaking of Christ's Resurrection in a spiritual sense, when we are enabled to rise to a new and heavenly life, when *we seek*, and savour,  
those

*those things which are above, where Christ sits at the right hand of God, Col. iii. 1.*

This is that excellent knowledge of Christ for which the Apostle counted all things but loss and dung, ver. 8. Had he rested in a mere speculative, historical knowledge of the Death and Resurrection of Christ without him, and been impatient of the energy and power of both within him, had he not so known Christ dying and raised again to life, as to be spiritually crucified with him, and to rise with him to newness of life; such a knowledge would not have availed him in the end.

The third passage is that in *Rom. vi. 4, 5, 6.* *Like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life: For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection.*

By this likeness of Christ's Death, and likeness of his Resurrection, it appears that there is a lively resemblance of both which a Christian is obliged to endeavour after. Then it follows: *Knowing this that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.*

3. *The Death and Sufferings of Christ are very powerful to engage and enable us to the great duties of crucifying worldly lusts, and mortifying corrupt affections, as they are effectual to work in us the most heart-bleeding sorrow for sin, the most vehement hatred and detestation of it, and to raise the soul to the greatest degrees of love and ingenuous gratitude.*

1. *To work in us the most heart-bleeding sorrow for sin.* Who can seriously consider Christ crucified,

cified, Christ bleeding on the Cross; bleeding from the sixth to the ninth hour, (from our twelve a Clock to three) his bleeding Head, crowned with sharp thorns, his bleeding Hands and Feet, and Side; I say, who can consider this and not bleed within? Who can *look upon him that was pierced*, and not be inwardly pierced himself, not be *pricke to the heart*, as they are said to be, Acts ii. 37. at the preaching of *Christ crucified*.

And when we consider that *he was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities*, or (as the words are rendred by some) of *our transgressions and iniquities*: When we consider that *we* have crucified the Lord of Life and Glory, that *our sins* nailed him to the Cross, wounded him to the heart, and put him to all the grief and pain he underwent, how can it be that our hearts should not be wounded within us? How can we forbear to express our sorrow for sin in some such words as those of *Jeremiah, My bowels, my bowels, I am pained at the very heart: O that my head were waters, and mine eyes a fountain of tears!*

And can we consider his *Agony* in the Garden, the *exceeding sorrowfulness of his Soul*, his *extream heaviness* and *sore amazement*, his *strong crying and tears*, and his *sweating great drops of blood*, and not be melted into holy mournings and relentings for our sins, and for all our unkind and unworthy behaviour towards Christ, who thus suffered for us?

How hard is that heart, which the so great and dolorous sufferings of our Saviour cannot melt and dissolve!

At the Passion of Christ (besides other Prodigies) it is said *the rocks rent*; and are our hearts harder than rocks, not to be affected with remorse at the consideration of *Christ crucified*?

It is Saint Hierom's observation: *When Christ died, all creatures were his fellow-sufferers; the sun was eclipsed, the earth shook, the rocks were cleft in sunder, the veil of the Temple was rent in twain, the graves opened: Man alone, for whom only Christ died, suffered not with him.*

*Omnis creatura Christo morienti si compatitur; sol obscuratur, terra movetur, petra*

*scinduntur, velum Templi dividitur, sepulchra aperiuntur: Solus homo non compatitur, pro quo solo Christus moritur.*

Certainly, if the consideration of our Saviour's Sufferings for our sakes cannot prevail to melt our hearts into an holy sorrow for our sins, nothing will ever do it.

And if it hath such a peculiar and sovereign efficacy to work an heart-bleeding sorrow for Sin, it will consequently be very effectual to the disengaging us from it, to the taking us off from all those vanities and lusts which were formerly most dear and pleasing to us.

If we are grieved at the heart for our *Self-will*, *Self-love*, and manifold disobediences, we will not continue to *make provision for the flesh to fulfil the lusts thereof*.

2. *The Death and Sufferings of Christ are effectual to work in us the most vehement hatred and detestation of Sin.* It appears from thence how hateful and abominable a thing Sin is to God, who is original Rectitude and infinite Purity. For how could he demonstrate a greater antipathy and displeasure against Sin, than in being pleased to *bruise* and *put to grief* the Son of his

love, and to give up *the brightness of his glory*, and the *express image of his person* to inexpressible dolours to the end he might make expiation for it.

If Sin were a slight inconsiderable thing, if it were not a thing of a most odious and vile nature, a high injury to *God*, and of sad and dismal consequence to *man*, he would not have required *such* a Sacrifice for it.

This consideration must needs be most forceable to the working in us a detestation of Sin, whatsoever grace and favour it hath found in our eyes. Suppose we our selves to have seen Christ in the last Scene of his Sufferings, and to have accompanied him from the Garden of *Gethsemane*, where he was in his *Agony*, and sweat drops of blood, to the High Priest's house, thence to the Judgment-Hall before *Pilate*, thence to Mount *Calvary*, in which places he was reproached, spit upon the face, scourged, and at last nailed alive to the Cross: And suppose him speaking to us, as in another sence *Pilate* spake of him; *Behold your King; Behold your Lord and Saviour: See the wounds which your Sins have given me; See how they have torn my flesh, and despitefully used me: But the unseen wounds, the inward sorrows of my Soul are such, as the heart of man cannot conceive, as neither hath the eye seen, nor the ear heard what may compare to them. Thus have your lusts dealt with me, and in all this see their cruelty.* If we had, I say, beheld our blessed Lord in his direful Sufferings, and heard him thus expressing himself to us, do we think we could still cherish and entertain, hug and embrace those Enemies of his which have put him to all this shame and torment?

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But if we have an *inward* knowledge and feeling of Christ crucified, it will most undoubtedly inflame us into a just indignation against those Lusts which suckt the Life-bloud of Christ, which slew and crucified the Lord of Glory. We shall say concerning *them*, what the *Jews* cried concerning *him*, *Away with them, away with them, they are not worthy to live*: Let these murderers of the just one die the death, but let *Jesus* live, and let the Life of Christ be manifested in us. How can that be longer sweet to me, which made Christ's Cup so exceeding bitter? How can I delight in that which made his Soul sorrowful unto death? How shall that be my *pleasure*, which was his *pain*, and put him to grief, such grief, that *there was no sorrow like unto his sorrow*? How should I glory in that, which put him to such an *open* shame?

3. *The Death and Sufferings of Christ are powerful to raise the Soul to the greatest degrees of Love and Gratitude.* We have already shewn that there never was a Love like the Love of Christ, comparable to that Love he express in giving himself an Offering and a Sacrifice to God for us.

Now, not to part with our Lusts for *him*, who parted with Life it self for *us*, not to put our selves to some smart and pain in crucifying the Lusts of the Flesh, in denying our Self-will, and taking up the Cross and following him, who hath, to amazement denied himself, and taken upon him the greatest of Sufferings for our sakes; this would be an instance of the unworthiest and vilest ingratitude, and the greatest unkindness imaginable done to Christ. This will be more grievous to him, than all his Sufferings from the

*Jews and Romans*, it being a frustration and disappointment of him in the great design, which we shewed, he had in submitting to those Sufferings.

But a Soul truly sensible of the Love of Christ in giving himself for us, can think nothing too dear and precious to part with for him, cannot look upon his Commands of *Self-denial* and *Self-Resignation* as grievous and unsufferable.

I will add, that the particular circumstances of Christ's last Sufferings have a special force to the enabling a Christian against such and such *particular* sins, as prevail most among men, and which are the fruitfulest sprouts and branches that grow out of that cursed stock of *Self-will*: As,

1. *Self-esteem*: An over-dear valuing a man's self, his fame and regard in the world; a seeking the praise and respects of men, and being disturbed at their disrespectts.

Now of how great efficacy must it needs be to the subduing this corruption to *consider him who endured such contradictions of sinners against himself*, and how he was exercised with all manner of scorns and derisions, all sorts of abuses, reproaches, injuries, and indignities, that the wit and malice of his enemies could devise, to render him base and despicable before men.

He was called a blasphemer, a deceiver, an enemy to *Cesar*, (or traiterous person) a seditious stirrer up of the people, and all this about the time of his last Passion; as before he was called a *Samaritan*, (or Heretick) and *Beelzebub*.

And as an expression of their contempt, they *spit upon his Face*, that sacred Face which the glorious

glorious Angels delighted to look upon, which *Abraham* and many Kings and Prophets, and righteous persons did desire to see. What indignity like to this! Then they *smote him on the Face*, adding farther contempt accompanied with pain, to the disgrace of having his Face besmeared with their filthy spittle. And withal they covered his Face, saying, *Prophecie unto us, thou Christ, who it is that smote thee.*

Thus contumeliously did they use the Anointed of the Lord; and as in the last passage they mockt at his *Prophetical*, so did they afterwards at his *Kingly Office*; putting on him a gorgeous Robe, plattng Thorns into the form of a Crown, and putting it on his head, and a Reed for a Sceptre into his hand, and then bowing the knee before him, saying, *Hail King of the Jews.*

These are some few instances of the many dishonours and disgraceful indignities done unto him.---- I might add that the kind of Death he suffered was as *ignominious* as painful, the death of slaves and vile offenders; and to add to the disgrace, they crucifie him between two Thieves.

Yea, even when he was bleeding upon the Cross they would not forbear to deride and revile him, expressing their scorn both in words and gestures. Nor were they that did thus, the *οἱ πολλοί*, the rude rabble only, but the chief Priests, Scribes and Elders.

Now consider this, O Christian, how it fared with Christ thy great Lord and Master, what affronts, what dishonours and reproaches he endured, and how unconcernedly and undisturbedly he bare them, how he *despised the shame*, how little he cared either for the applause or contempt of the world, how he chose rather to be reputed

and dealt with as the most abject and basest of men, than to be glorious in the world, and to shine in its vain honours; And will not this prevail with thee to set thy self against thy *Pride* and *Self-esteem*? Surely it is not possible that thou, who art infinitely beneath thy blessed Saviour, shouldest set a high value on thy self, and affect the praises of men, or be greatly concerned at the contemptuous behaviour and affronts of the world, when thou seriously considerest how Christ was used, reproached, contemned and despised, and with what calmness and sedateness of spirit he bore it. *The disciple is not above his master, nor the servant above his Lord, Matth. x. 24. It is enough for the disciple that he be as his master, and the servant as his Lord, ver. 25.*

2. *As for that lust of Self-pleasing, the love of ease and pleasure, an averseness to endure hardships, a studious care to gratifie the cravings of our fleshly appetites, is there not enough in the consideration of Christ crucified to cure also this distemper of the Soul? Did not Christ out of dear compassion towards men leave his Fathers house, where was all fulness and all joy, and humbled himself to become man, and took upon him the form of a servant? He endured cold and heat, hunger and thirst, wearisome labours, long fastings, and faintness, he bare our griefs, and carried our sorrows, and (as hath been shewn) endured inexpressibly worse griefs and sorrows than any of ours.*

Now how can we consider this, and be any longer dearly affected to our Carcasses, sollicitous for the pleasing of our appetites, and pampering our Bodies, curious about Meats and Drinks, and studious for that which is most delicious

licious and grateful to the flesh? And as for the *impure* pleasures of the world, no consideration can be more powerful to extinguish in us all desires to them, than that of \* Christ upon the Cross.

\* Cum me  
pulsat tur-  
pis aliqua

*cogitatio, recurro ad vulnera Christi, & sanabor.*

3. *Revenge and Hatred*: Who can harbour these Lusts in his Soul that considers that Christ laid down his life for his enemies? And that almost the last words he spake on the Cross, amidst that shame and torment they put him to, were a prayer for them: *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do*, Luke xxiii. 34.

4. *Covetousness, or the Love of Money*: Who that considers, that *though Christ was rich, yet he became poor, that we through his poverty might be rich*; and that it was this lust that betrayed the Lord of Life to his merciless enemies, can find it difficult to mortifie and subdue his inclinations to it?

To conclude this: To the serious Christian the word of the Cross of Christ is sharper than any two edged sword, to the destroying all our evil and corrupt affections.

But I fear that it is not considered, as it ought, by most of us. Christians generally consider the Sufferings of Christ only as they were designed to expiate sin, and in reference to what he hath done for them, not to the extirpation of sin, not to *the crucifying the flesh with the affections and lusts*: And hence it is that their consideration thereof is no more available to this great end.

## C H A P. XV.

*That the frequent consideration of the great Recompence of Reward is a mighty help to the attaining of Self-Resignation.*

XV. **T**enthly and lastly: in order to the attaining of *Self-Resignation*, let us look to the great recompence of Reward. Let us with an eye of faith frequently look upon the promise of eternal life, *the prize that is set before us, the Crown of Life and Glory, that fadeth not away, reserved in Heaven for all obedient and resigned Souls.*

It is said of *Jesus*, Heb. xii. 2. that *for the joy that was set before him, he endured the Cross, (as exquisitely painful as it was) and despised the shame; all the mockings and insultings of his enemies over him, and the vile ignominy and infamy of his Death.*

And in conformity to him a Christian may be enabled to endure the inward Cross, in being crucified to the world, in dying to sin and his own corrupt will, by cying stedfastly the joy and glory set before him, by often contemplating the future Reward, which is infinitely above all the labours that accompany *Self-Resignation*, and the pains and sorrows that do attend it.

The Great Apostle of the Gentiles, who was acquainted not only with the greatest sufferings from the world, and the labours and pains of Mortification and Self-denial, but also with this blessed Reward, (having been rapt up into Paradise, where he saw and heard unutterable things) he (I say) having well weighed both, doth thus pro-

pronounce, Rom. viii. 18. *I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared (bear no proportion) with the glory that shall be revealed in us.* If the sufferings be laid in one ballance, and the glorious Reward in the other, the Glory will unspeakably outweigh them: For it is *a far more exceeding and eternal weight of Glory*; in comparision of which our heaviest afflictions are but *light*, and our longest but for a moment.

That God is a *Rewarder of them that diligently seek him*, is the first principle to be believed in <sup>2 Cor. iv. 17.</sup> Religion, without which all our motions and endeavours therein will be weak and feeble. And the *End* of our Faith and Obedience being much in our eye, the excellency and infinite desirableness thereof will sweeten all that sorrowfulness, and take away all that unpleasantness which may be in the means.

A firm Belief and frequent fixed thoughts on the heavenly Reward would fill our hearts with joy and strength, and carry us with great ease through whatsoever difficulties lye before us in the way of entire Obedience and *Self-Resignation*. None of the Divine Commandments can be grievous to the heavenly minded, no trials over-burdenfome.

The serious believing thoughts of the glory to be enjoyed will put such life, spirit and vigour into us, as will cause us to *run the race set before us*, not only with *patience*, but with delight and joyfulness: So that *we shall sing in the ways of the Lord*, as the expression is *Psal. 138. 5. and glorifie him even in the fires*, *Esay 24. 15.* We shall be enabled to submit to God's Will under great afflictions, as without murmuring, so with thankfulness.

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They that grudge to give God more than the fruit of their lips, than some good words, wishes, or intentions, or some formal ceremonious observances, or some reformation in lesser and easier matters, and think they have done as became those that fought God's Kingdom, surely these have a very mean esteem of, and miserably undervalue the glory and felicities of the life to come. They never spent so many thoughts on Heaven, as to have any true and worthy conception of the happiness of it; otherwise they could never imagine the doing and suffering no more than this comes to, to be fit to be recompenced with such a Reward: or that God will ever reward such a shadow of Religion, with so real and substantial a Happiness, their withering leaves of outward profession, with such a Crown of Glory as shall never fade. But those that frequently affect their Souls with the thoughts of that bliss which is promised in the Gospel to those *who deny themselves, and take up their Cross and follow Christ* in spiritual Obedience and *Resignation*, can never think much of any pains or trouble this may put them to. If the Devil can prevail and perswade, as he doth by those airy and imaginary satisfactions he promiseth, what influence would God's promises of *fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore, and an everlasting Kingdom*, have upon all those that duly consider them?

How will men deny themselves, what labours will they undergo, what hardships will they suffer for some worldly advantages which fall far short of a Kingdom? for some petty principality and dominion over others, for a preferment that hath some little authority in it, or brings in  
some

some profit? But had any such ambitious ones hopes of a Kingdom, how would they be transported with all excesses of joy, what difficulties, dangers and painful labours would they go through and think them nothing? And can we grudge to do or suffer as much, if it were necessary, for an infinitely more glorious Kingdom than any in this world, if we really believed it attainable by us?

If we were promised a great earthly reward upon condition we would abstain from such and such things as are very pleasing and grateful to us, would we not do it? And shall not the eternal blessedness, which God, who is as faithful as able to perform, hath promised, be of like power and force with us? Nay, shall it not be of far greater force proportionable to the quality of the Reward? When all that we can do is but very little and utterly unworthy to be compared with this glorious Reward, is it possible we should do less than we can, for the obtaining of it, if we consideratively and believingly thought of it?

*Know ye not (saith the Apostle) that they which run in a race, run all, but one receiveth the prize? so run that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery, is temperate in all things: Now they do it to obtain a corruptible Crown, but we an incorruptible, 1 Cor. ix. 24, 25. If they in the Isthmian Games were so careful to observe an accurate diet for the preparing and enabling them to those exercises; if they were temperate and continent in all things, denying themselves in their sensitive desires; if they were willing to weary and spend themselves in the race, to endure blows and wounds in their combat;*

bat ; and thought no diligence, no labour, no pains nor hazards too great for but a flowery or leafy, a fading and corruptible Crown, a short and perishing Reward ; would not Christians much more *run their race with patience, fight the good fight of faith, endure hardship*, deny themselves and their fleshly desires, while an *exceeding and eternal weight of Glory* is in their eye ? If the men of this world shall think no pains too great for uncertain riches, and which, while they enjoy them, are imbittered with many fears and anxious cares ; would not the lively hope of eternal life, and a treasure in Heaven, which neither *the moth can eat, nor rust corrupt, nor thieves steal*, ingage us to greater labours and self-denials ? Would it not more enravish our hearts, more strongly affect us, and make us more intent, earnest and industrious ? Surely it would.

Awake, awake then, O thou delicate and lazy Christian ! rouse up thy self, and stir up the gift of God in thee : Go up to *Mount Nebo*, and take a fair view of *Canaan*, that pleasant and glorious Land : See what a goodly Heritage is reserved for thee, and *how great that goodness is which God hath laid* (or \* stor'd) *up for them that fear him*. Eye the fulness of the Reward : Keep it in thy mind, believe it with thine heart, and then how chearfully wilt thou travel through the Wilderness to *Canaan* before thee. Yea, this will make the very Wilderness a little *Canaan*, or Land of rest and delight to thee ; it will make it a little *Eden*, and *Garden of the Lord*. Nor wilt thou then grudge at it, if God shall prove and humble thee by a long journey in the Wilderness, *to know what is in thine heart*,

(as

\* פְּסָלִים  
Palm  
xxx. 10.

(as it is said of *Israel* in the figure and letter) Deut. viii.  
 whether there be in thee an obedient will, a resigned, patient, submissive temper as to his commands and disposals. Thou wilt not be difficultly perswaded to believe that *Canaan* will make an abundant recompence for all thy travels and wearisome labours. And if in the mean while God feeds thee with the *bread of heaven*, sustains thee with *Manna* in the Wilderness, art thou not well dealt with and kindly treated by him? Hereafter to feed with Angels, to sit down with *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob* in the Kingdom of Heaven, and here to be provided for with *Angels food* (as *Manna* is called) to the full: To have joy *unspeakable and glorious*, an eternity of pleasures hereafter, and with all *peace which passeth all understanding* here; inward pleasures and delicious satisfactions from reflexions upon the doing of thy duty; *the peaceable fruit of righteousness*, which *thy sowing to the Spirit* will yield thee, in this life: To be crowned with Glory in Heaven, and on Earth *to be crowned with loving kindness and tender mercies*: These fore-tastes of happiness and earnestness of the great Reward; these *aureole*, and little Coronets for the present, and the assurance of a massie Crown, a *weight of glory*, in the other life, methinks should be of force to endear obedience, and greatly to sweeten patience to thee; to remove all apprehension of difficulty and harshness in what God will have thee either do or suffer.

If there be any Generosity in thee, thou canst not but be very angry with, and condemn thyself, whensoever thou feelest any secret grudging and repining at what God would have thee under-

undertake, seeing he hath proposed such a Reward to animate thee to it.

If there were any Ingenuity in thee, thou couldst not chuse but blush and be ashamed at that little thou either sufferest or doest for the Kingdom of God.

Thy Obedience is due to his Commands, and thy submission, to his wise, righteous, and good will, though there were no future Reward for thee: But will God bestow on thy *Obedience* and thy *Patience* (the two parts of *Self-Resignation*) so glorious a reward? Will he reward an obedience for a short time, and that far short of perfection too, and a momentary suffering of affliction, with an eternity of bliss, with a glory so transcendently and astonishingly great?

And is this great Reward so near? this present life is but short, thou hast but a few days to continue here, there is but a step between thee and eternal life: There is between this and the other world the Vale of the shadow of death, a darksome passage, but a very short one, and thou shalt enter upon possessing the reward of the inheritance; which at the glorious appearance of Jesus Christ shall be grown up to its full proportion.

Canst thou seriously consider these things, and think any thing too dear and precious, which God would have thee part with, and deny thy self in; or call any thing grievous, which he either commands or tries thy *Resignation* to his Will by?

THE END.

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